

THE
HALL FAMILY


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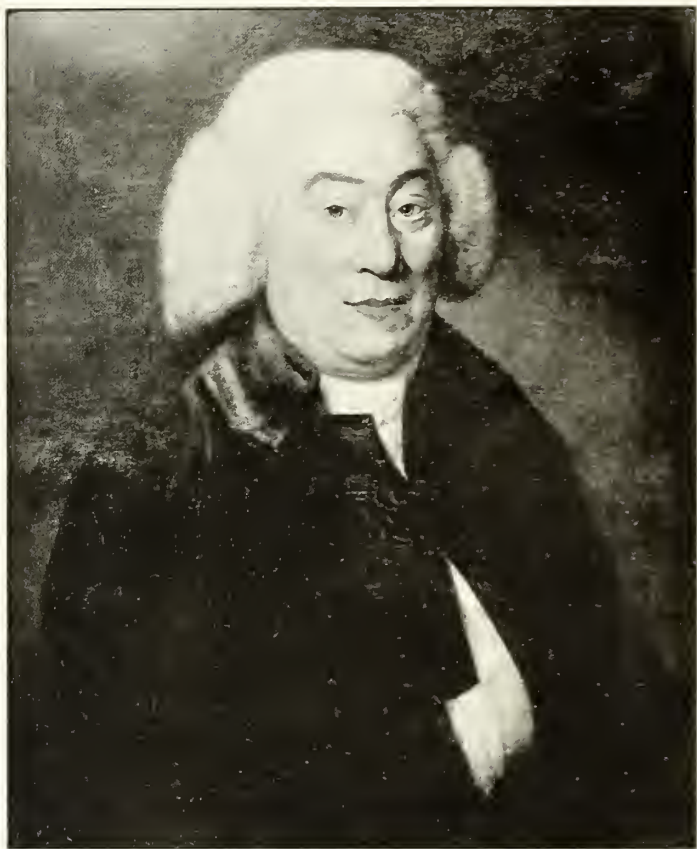
Donald White
with his uncle's love.
Jan'y. 1910.
R.H.W.

THE HALL FAMILY



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REV. ROBERT HALL, ARNSBY.

1728-1791.

(From an oil painting by P. Vandeyck.)

THE
HALL FAMILY
II

BY
R. H. W.

“The honourable records of an upright race”
DIANA MALLORY

BRISTOL
J. W. ARROWSMITH, 11 QUAY STREET
—
1910

One hundred copies only printed for Private Circulation.

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THE HALL FAMILY.

THERE comes a time to most houses when a clearance is made, and papers and letters never before seen by the present generation are brought to light. So it is now with the Hall Family ; and a number of documents, stained by age and damp, have been found, throwing a light on the habits and thoughts of our ancestors. The interest mostly attaches to the memory of the Rev. Robert Hall, of Arnsby, Leicestershire, and his more celebrated son of the same name, of Cambridge, Leicester and Bristol.

The elder Robert Hall (my great-grandfather) was born April 15th, 1728 (O.S.), at a village called Black Heddon in the parish of Stannington, about twelve miles north-west of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. It is said, that a long line of ancestors, reputable farmers, lived in the same house in which he was born. Many details of his religious convictions, and of his leaving the Church* in which he had

* " His father was a worthy honest man of the episcopal persuasion, but his mother was a presbyterian."—Appendix to *Life*, p. 55.

been brought up, and joining the Baptists, are given in a memoir preceding his sermons published in 1828. He was called to the work of the ministry in 1752, in the twenty-fourth year of his age, and laboured at a place called Juniper-Dye-House, near Hexham, until the following year, when he removed to Arnsby.

In his early youth he was, like Bunyan of a hundred years earlier, tormented by the morbid sentiments of a gloomy Calvinism, which happily has lost its terrors for the present generation. When recovering from the effects of a painful accident, he met with a second disaster which caused him great distress. "But he repeatedly declared, that all the pain of these broken bones did by no means equal the anguish of his mind. The doleful sound of 'damnation, damnation' seemed continually in his ears. He apprehended that his sins were unpardonable, and that God *could not* save him if He would."

All this reads like the spiritual conflict and "dark time of despair" of the author of *Pilgrim's Progress*. There can be no doubt that when he accepted the pastorate of Arnsby he held all the five Calvinist points, of which the first is, "That election is eternal, personal, absolute, and unconditional," and in this faith he remained all his life.

On a visit which I paid to Arnsby in 1883, I had the opportunity of inspecting the books of the Baptist Church there, which revealed an amount of bigotry and intolerance not likely to have promoted harmony in that little village. Take as an example the following extract :—

“ Att a church meeting at Arnsbe the third day of the eight month 1714 Frances Spridy being her maiden name was cutt of from the church for her evil acting as namely for contracting marridg with a wicked man and also for going to babylon to be joyned together according to the wicked way of the Church of England.”

Several such entries of exclusion for the same reason occur.

June 28th, 1751. “ A church meeting, a day of fasting and prayer at Arnsby to seek the mind of the Lord on account of a Minister to go in and out before us as a He Goat before the flock.” This eventually resulted in the invitation to my great-grandfather to be the minister. The expression “ He Goat ” occurs in the same sense in the records of Broadmead Baptist Church, Bristol (under date about 1639), where strangely enough a *woman* (Mrs. Kelly) is described as being “ like a hee-goat before ye flock.” The earliest document in this collection is appro-

priately the licence to preach, dated April 18th, 1757.

“London. At the general Quarter Session of the peace holden for the City of London at the Guildhall within the said city on Monday the eighteenth day of April in the thirtieth year of the reign of our Sovereign lord George the Second King of Great Britain &c. Before Marshe Dickinson Esq Mayor of the City of London Sir Crisp Gascoigne Knt. one of the aldermen of the city aforesaid Thomas Chitty Esq. Sir Richard Glyn Knt. Francis Gosling Esq other of the aldermen of the said city and others their fellows Justices assigned to keep the peace of our said lord the King within the said city and also to hear and determine divers felonies trespasses and other misdeeds committed within the said city. I do hereby certify that Robert Hall a minister, preacher or teacher of a congregation of protestants dissenting from the Church of England who scruple the Baptizing of infants commonly called Baptists came into this court and in pursuance of an act of Parliament in the first year of the reign of King William and Queen Mary Intituled an act for exempting their Majestys’ protestant Subjects dissenting from the Church of England from the penaltys of certain laws did make and subscribe the

Declaration mentioned in a statute made in the thirtieth year of the reign of King Charles the second Intituled an act for the more effectual preserving the King's person and Government by disabling papists from sitting in either House of Parliament. And I do further certify that the said Robert Hall at the same Court in obedience to an act of Parliament made in the first year of the reign of his late Majesty King George the first Intituled an act for the further security of his Majesty's person & Governmt. and the succession of the Crown in the heirs of the late princess Sophia being protestants and for extinguishing the hopes of the pretended prince of Wales and his open and secret abettors take the oaths in the act therein set forth. And I do further certify that the said Robert Hall did likewise at the same Court in pursuance of the said act of the first of King William and Queen Mary declare his approbation of and subscribed the articles of religion mentioned in the statute made in the thirteenth year of the reign of the late Queen Elizabeth Intituled an act for the ministry of the Church to be of sound religion except the 34th 35th and 36th Articles and these words in the twentieth article (the Church hath power to decree Rites or Ceremonies and Authority in Controversies of faith

and yet) and also except part of the seven and twentieth article touching Infant Baptism And I do moreover certify that the making and subscribing the said Declaration and taking the said Oaths and making the said Declaration of approbacion and Subscription to the said articles in manner aforesaid by the said Robert Hall at the said General Quarter session was then and there entred of Record in the said Court."

(Signature illegible.)

The Act, 1 George I, the last of the statutes above referred to, contained three oaths to which the applicant swore :—

1st. Allegiance to his Majesty.

2nd. "I. A. B. do swear, that I do from my heart abhor, detest, and abjure, as impious and heretical, that damnable doctrine and position, that princes excommunicated or deprived by the Pope, or any authority of the See of Rome, may be deposed or murdered by their subjects or any other whatsoever. And I do declare, that no foreign prince, person, prelate, state or potentate, hath, or ought to have any jurisdiction, power, superiority, pre-eminence, or authority, ecclesiastical, or spiritual, within this realm." So help me God.

3rd. Abjuration of "the person pretended to be Prince of Wales during the life of the late King James, and since his decease pretended to be and taking upon himself the stile and title of King of England by the name of James the third, or of Scotland by the name of James the eighth, or the stile and title of King of Great Britain. Also declaring that the succession to the Crown 'stands limited to the Princess Sophia, Electress and Duchess dowager of Hanover and the heirs of her body being Protestants.' "

The Articles of Religion to which my great-grandfather took exception were :—

Article 34. Of the Traditions of the Church.

Article 35. The Public reading of the Homilies.

Article 36. Of the Consecration of Archbishops and Bishops, and the ordering of Priests and Deacons.

The life of the elder Robert Hall, extending from 1728 to 1791, covers a space commencing with the first year of the reign of George II, who was essentially a King of Hanover, and spoke English with a strong German accent, to the thirty-first year of his grandson, George III, born and bred an Englishman, whom his subjects with affectionate playfulness were pleased to call "Farmer George." At the age of seventeen his

enthusiasm must have been kindled by the near presence of the Young Pretender, Charles Edward Stuart, passing the borderland, where young Hall spent his early days on the farm of his forefathers of at least three generations. He must have heard of the arrest of the march at Derby, of the homeward retreat, and final defeat at Culloden. The account book which suggests these remarks, with scraps of diary, sundry farming memoranda, homely recipes and Godly prayers, commences in the year 1775 and ends with his life in 1791.

In 1775 he was in the prime of life, forty-seven years old, and this was the year which saw the first revolt of the American Colonists against the rule of the Home Country, and the outbreak of the American War with the Battle of Bunker's Hill. An entry in the account book under October 17th, 1775, is for "Two books on American matters 0 : 3 : 0." He lived to see Washington made the first President of the new Republic, and died ten years before the union of Great Britain and Ireland, and long before the glories of Trafalgar and Corunna and Waterloo had added lustre to the British arms. Louis XV, "the well beloved," was King of France until within a year of the opening of this account book, the throes of the Great Revolution were beginning to work,

and two years after the diary was closed the great drama reached its height in the tragedy of the death of the King.

In the literary world Robert Hall, as a boy, might have received from the hands of Defoe a copy of his *Robinson Crusoe* and from Swift his *Gulliver's Travels*. He may have heard Pope read his *Rape of the Lock* or his translation of Homer, or what perhaps may have been more to his taste, he may have visited the mother Church of his diocese and have listened to the great Bishop Butler declaim in stately periods on the "Analogy of Religion, Natural and Revealed, to the Constitution and Course of Nature." Those were days long before the invention of the steam engine, and of fast and easy travel, but if he went much to London he might have met Dr. Johnson and Oliver Goldsmith in Fleet Street on their way to hear Sir Joshua at the Royal Academy; and have heard Burke and Fox and Sheridan plead at the trial of Warren Hastings. If he had gone to visit his brother Christopher, who was minister of a church at Crown Alley, Moorfields, in 1780, he would have witnessed the disgraceful riots of Lord George Gordon, and seeing Newgate in flames, would have trembled for the safety of the great city. After ministering to the same congregation in four different places of worship,

Christopher was laid to rest in that *campo santo* of dissent, Bunhill Fields.

The date at which I write this (1909) is 134 years after the opening of the diary. If he had made the same retrospection then it would have taken him back to 1641, in the reign of Charles I, the year of the execution of Lord Strafford.

His portrait, in oils, which I possess represents him in a full "cauliflower" wig, having a dignified appearance, and the arched eyebrows which have been noticeable in some of his descendants.

This was painted by Peter (or Philip?) Vandyke,* an Anglo-Flemish portrait painter, born in 1729. At the invitation of Sir Joshua Reynolds, he came to England and worked as his assistant. He afterwards settled at Bristol, where he obtained a good practice. Several of his works appeared at the Incorporated Society and at the Free Society between 1762 and 1772. There are by him in the London National Portrait Gallery portraits of Coleridge and Southey. That of Coleridge is engraved in Vol. I of *Early Recollections of Coleridge*, by Joseph Cottle. There is no clue to the date of Mr. Hall's portrait, but it looks like that of a man of about fifty years of age, and

* "A Descendant of the great Vandyke."—Cottle's *Recollections of Coleridge*.

See Bryan's *Dictionary of Painters and Engravers*.

gives the impression of great common sense and high intelligence.

The account book, which is in my possession, opens with a few recipes for the ailments of horses, of which take this as a specimen :—

“ To cure a very bad bruise and sore through the saddle pinching the weather skin. Take old shoe soles (viz. leather) burn them to ashes, sift the ashes and mix them with the same quantity of burnt alum and quick lime. Do this powder on ye sore every day.

“ This I know to be exelant.” R. Hall.

Then at intervals occur the following :—

“ 1775. Sept: 24. Lord's Day. Went to Enderby at night and preached from Prov. iii, 17. ‘ Her (Wisdom's) ways are pleasantness and all her path is peace.’ By wisdom we are to understand either. 1. A property or 2. a person. As a property it is either Divine or Human. The person xt . . . the ways are either the ways wisdom has taken in which God proceeds towards us, or the ways appointed by Wisdom for us to walk in towards God, of both of which it may be said her ways are pleasant and peacable.”

“ Sept: 27, 1775. A Fast day at Arnsby.”

“ Oct: 1, 1775. The Ordinance day. An affecting time being a funeral for Ann Smith. from Job. 19. 15. ‘ I know my Redeemer liveth.’ ”

“ Oct: 6. 1775. Mr. Evans took home his wife. He buried his wife only 7 months and 3 days before he married again. ‘ May the Lord overrule all for good ! ’ ”

“ Oct: 12. 1775. How precarious are all things here ! The no-horned cow which was designed to go to the Fair was the evening before gored by another which was sent and sold. There seems great danger as Mr. Allen thinks who was here this day. How common when God frowns for man to help forward the affliction. Help Lord.”

(It is difficult to see the point of this.)

“ Nov. 1, 1775. Received the Quarterings £8 2. 6.” (No doubt the quarter’s salary from the Baptist Church.)

“ Nov. 19. 1775. Lord’s Day sold a Sermon 6d. Preached from John i. 19 ‘ Out of his fulness we all receive Grace for Grace ’ as likewise the Lord’s day before. Blessed be God had a good time in my own soul.”

“ Nov. 25. Satturday. Received to my great surprize from Mr. Newton* of Olney £10. o. o. do. from Mr. Trinder £5. o. o. remitted to me in a £15. Bank bill. This is the Lord's doing and Marvellous in my eyes. O to be found worthy of favours. The above was to enable me to take my afflicted wife to London.”

“ Dec. 16. 1775. Read sermons to Bishops by Mr. Murray of Newcastle, author of *Sermons to asses*. Mr. Danl. Feud buried a child aged 4 years on Wednesday. Dec. 13, and this day Dec. 16. I hear that John Brooks has one dead to be buried here to-morrow. Who hath slain all these? Sin. Lord, prepare me and mine for thyself that we may die to reign on high.”

“ Jan. 1. 1776. [See an interesting note of self dedication printed on page 24 of his *Life*.] I went to Blaby Mill and preached from Hos: 12. 4. ‘He wept and made supplication.’ A portion much on my mind on Monday morning Jany. 1.”

* The Rev. John Newton (friend of Cowper), ordained deacon and priest, 1764, to the curacy of Olney, Bucks, at a stipend of £60 a year, the vicar being non-resident. In 1779 he published the *Olney Hymns*. He was the author of “How sweet the name of Jesus sounds” and “Glorious things of Thee are spoken.”

Jany. 9. 1776. Read London *Evening Post* and according to undoubted authority and exact calculation the Nation's loss through the American Quarrel amounted to twenty-seven Millions sterling. A great snow came on last Lord's day, viz. Jany. 7th above 6 foot high in the Grave Yard."

"Jany. 31. I received a letter from Mr. Trinder of Northampton by the hand of Mr. Bruin. To my joy and surprize I am thereby informed that Dr. Ford's spouse put into his hand a Ten-pound note for me. What shall I render unto the Lord for this fresh instance of his goodness to an unprofitable, unholy, poor weak creature. How good has my God been to me all my life long. Lord help me to praise pray and trust as long as I live. O give me a heart to love, etc. Mysterious are God's Providences. Oh that he who has hitherto helped may heal and restore my distressed companion that we may live to pray and praise together. Lord help me a poor weak creature and teach me for I am exceeding ignorant even I often think like a beast before thee. Oh that I may ever act becoming my obligations to God and man. Lord help a feeble worm."

"Lord's Day. April 14. 1776. Young

people collected for the Sermon that day. Text ' Bless ye Ladds.' £3 17. 6."

" April 22. 1776. This day Abram Coltnoor's wife's funeral was preached from Heb. 13. 5. ' He hath said " I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." ' A pretty good time, Blessed be God."

" June 30. 1776. Preached from Heb. ii. 3. ' How shall we escape &c.' and from the same the Thursday night before at Kettering. Had good liberty. Bless the Lord. O Work for thy name's sake."

" Sept. 24. 1776. Preached at Nottingham from John 12. 21. ' Sir, we would see Jesus.'

" Meathod.

" I. How. II. Where. III. When. II. Why, would they see Jesus, and V. who, would see Him as the improvement."

" NOTE.—My dear Wife died Saturday morning at 9 o'Clock, Dec. 21. 1776. She was comforted Tuesday morning ye 17th but did not discover it till the 18th at about 10 o'Clock at night when in holy rapture she said ' He 's come, He 's come, He 's come.' Blessed, Blessed be God for his appearance for her. Bless the Lord o my soul. O that this year Jany. 1. 1777 may be a year of mercy to my Person, my

Family, the neighbourhood (whose souls I long for) the church and the State. Lord keep me pure, make me fervent in thy work, faithful to thy cause and active in it. Prepare goodness for me and mine. May we have peace with thee and one another, near access to thee, fervent love to thee, strong faith in thee, and a constant fear of thee. Be not a terror to me o Lord. Withdraw thine hand from me as to continued or renewed troubles, but as to affliction, Thy will be done. Keep me O Lord, keep me and mine from Sin whatever we may suffer. Bless thy word o Lord in the villages this year. May the Church at Arnsby prosper be fruitful and peacable, Holy and Humble. Lord work by thy poor instrument. R. Hall."

"Dec. 6. 1777. Blessed be God for prosperity in life. Lord grant a continued Blessing and especially on our souls. May I be more devoted to God and in all things directed of him. O to be kept from sinning, and on the contrary enjoy his approbation in all matters, and enjoy peace of conscience with God and all men. Amen."

"For Scalds, Burns &c. Sweet oil 3 oz. Best yellow Wax 1 oz. Simmered together till it boil. Then pour it into a pot and put to it while hot half an

ounce of extract of lead stirring it till cold, and immediately its fit for use. Grows white when kept moist. Excellent this! worth more than will easily be credited."

I find frequent entries of collections for the "Bristol Education Society," now the Bristol Baptist College, averaging about eleven guineas per annum. It also appears that the old gentleman kept a hearse for the accommodation of his flock, for there are several entries of receipts for its hire, as the following :—

"Nov. 21. 1775. Hearse went to Moreton to fetch old Mr. Swan to Little Peatling £0. 10. 0."

The price of meat throughout the diary was about 3d. per pound—beef, lamb, mutton and veal, as many entries for 1775-6 show.

Two tragic events connected with his life may here be noted. On January 1st, 1765, a devotional meeting of ministers was held in the evening at a farmhouse near Arnsby. A Mr. Christian, who had been preaching in the morning, took part in a discussion on the text Job ix, 23, "If the scourge slay suddenly, he will laugh at the trial of the innocent." This involved the question whether sudden death was to good men an object of desire

or of dread. "When it came to Mr. Christian's turn to speak, he expatiated upon the delightful surprize attendant on an instantaneous transmission to the world of bliss. A flood of rapturous tears followed—he leaned his head on the back of the chair, and while the words faltered on his tongue, he took his flight and departed."* Strange to say, his companions did not recognise the urgency of the case, and instead of summoning medical aid, they sat up all night with their departed brother in solemn prayer.

Another singular instance is connected with his eldest daughter Ann. She married Colonel James Cotton under romantic circumstances. The Colonel, riding or driving through Arnsby, had to wait there while his horse was reshod, and by accident met Mr. Hall's daughter, with whom he fell in love and subsequently married. I see under the head "occurrences" "July 2. 1783. Mr. Cotton" (whom he sometimes calls Colonel Cotton) "and my daughters set off for London on Wednesday." Was this after the wedding, as it was the custom then for the bridesmaid to go off with the bride and bridegroom? During a tour which this young couple took in Spain, my great-grandfather dreamt one night that they were in great danger, and the

* *Life*, p. 29.

dream being repeated, he spent the whole of the night in prayer for them, recording the time next morning. Some time afterwards he learnt that they were in great danger of their lives at some little country inn in Spain, and that murder was committed in the house that night.

Two only of his letters survive. One addressed to his life long friend—

“ Revd. Mr. J. Ryland,
“ Northampton.

“ April 20, 1790.”

Part of it refers to a controversy with “ Agnostos.” He says in playful satire, “ It is true you have placed a noose about the neck of his main arguments, but I think the rope might have been drawn much tighter. Perhaps some will think it will make him (?) being too much before, and perhaps others may think, he will rather couch, being through slackness got too much behind. Either way gives pain and causes a real but lingering death. But had it been placed over the right ear and drawn much tighter than it is, his sentiment would have hung in a graceful Tiborn like manner and perhaps much sooner expired sending him off with a good jerk, would have hastened expiration.” He explains all this by a theological disquisition.

The Halls and the Rylands were great friends for generations. The Rev. John Ryland, of Northampton, preached the funeral sermon for Robert Hall, of Arnsby,* and my grandfather, when minister at Leicester, preached the funeral sermon for Dr. Ryland, of Bristol.

The second letter has a pathetic interest. It is to his son at Cambridge. It is dated March 10th and 11th, 1791, and is endorsed, "My dear Father's last letter." He died on the 13th March. It is a long letter, giving his son good practical advice about the government of the tongue, etc. "But as you far excell in many things I heartily wish you to excell in everything your very defective Father."

Mr. Hall married Jane Catchaside, "daughter of very creditable parents," July 18th, 1751. She died December 21st, 1776, aged 47, and he married, June 21st, 1780, Elizabeth Swan, widow, of Northampton, by whom he had no issue. She died March 3rd, 1817, and is buried at Harvey Lane Chapel, Leicester.

He was the father of fourteen children,

* "Salvation finished: A funeral sermon occasioned by the death of the Rev. Robert Hall Sen. by John Ryland Jun. M.A. to which is annexed Mr. Fuller's oration at the Grave, with an appendix containing some brief memoirs of Mr. Hall's life, and a short history of the Baptist Church at Arnsby, over which he was Pastor seven and thirty years." London. [N.D.]

and it may be that the advent of one of these suggested to him the following lines :—

AN ENIGMA.

“ In a small village lives a pair
Who Heaven’s connubial favours share.
N. S. the worthy person’s name
And to their house a stranger came
On June the 23rd at night,
In a most pitiable plight.
His feet were bare, and bare his head,
And on his back no garments spread,
This sad condition made him cry
So much, ’twas thought that he would die.
They with the neighbours of the place
Were much alarmed at his case,
And Mrs. N took such a fright
She could not bear the affecting sight,
It made her almost faint away
And kept her ill for many a day.
Now pity touched her husband’s heart
And made him act a tender part.
His thoughts, his words, his actions tend
To treat this stranger as a friend,
And had his wants not been supplied
In a short time he must have died.
His weakness so extreme was grown
He could not reach the nearest town ;
At length they great compassion show
And clothed him quite from top to toe—
Most generous treatment you ’ll allow
To one they never saw till now—
But in this case what could they do ?
Although the neighbours showed compassion,
’Twas but by words of form and fashion.
They sent nor hat, nor coat, nor shoe,
When sleep had cheered his weary head
And he was fully clothed and fed

They questioned him and much entreated
And often since have this repeated
That he would tell them whence he came ?
What he came for, and what 's his name ?
But he declined all such narration
Nor gave one word of information,
No promises of good avail
And e'en the fiercest threatenings fail,
Such stubborn silence does he keep
He 'll only eat, and drink, and sleep,
In some respects his turn of mind
Seems of the most good-natured kind,
For if at any time you use
The strongest language of abuse,
Or even rogue or villain call
He will not seem provoked at all ;
Nay, in this very trying case
He 'll sometimes laugh you in the face.
You 'll think perhaps he 's very mild
No ! sometimes fractious as a child
His temper 's changeable and teasing,
And then there 's no such thing as pleasing.
His politics are very strange
They seem to take the widest range,
In wish or prayer he will not join
For George or for his royal line,
That they may long the sceptre sway,
Yet who should reign he does not say
He is no Frenchman in his heart,
Nor acts the Jacobin's vile part.
To the Ministry makes no objections
And scorns all scurrilous reflections.
He holds religion of that kind
Which seems to no one sect inclined,
Whether 'tis new or like the many
'Tis hard to say or whether any.
He is no Methodist 'tis plain
Nor does he wear the Papal chain,
He disregards all power sublime,
So prelacy is not his theme ;

And for the Presbyterian claim
He treats it as an empty name.
Those privileges which arise from birth
These most he seems to prize,
They have on him the force of laws
And thence he all his comfort draws.
He may an Independent prove ?
No ! sprinkling infants he don't love
May we him then a Baptist call ?
No ! dipping folks is worst of all.
Perhaps he is then you 'll say a Quaker ?
No ! of their light he 's no partaker
Nor does he claim the least relation
To those denying Revelation.
He 's very plainly to be seen
What all the world save two have been
And yet more strange and still more clever,
What no man is or can be ever.
This is the stranger's wondrous fame,
Reader, pray strive to find his name
His person 's amiable and fair.
With large blue eyes, and fine light hair,
Then he 's quite young ? Nay, don't be bold
He's toothless quite as if quite old.
And yet such is this wondrous case
It dont affect his speech or face
For fluently he 'll read a page
As any reader of his age,
And when he speaks 'tis all by rule,
Though not brought up at Grammar School.
This genius of a strange degree
Come into Bedfordshire and see,
And if to speak you feel inclined
Most freely tell him all your mind,
Like one who travels kingdoms round
He 's never dashed or bashful found
And when you see him should you speak
In Hebrew, Latin, French or Greek,
He 'll answer fluently and strong,
As well as in his Mother tongue."

Of the fourteen children mentioned above six only survived him, of whom two were sons, John, who inherited the farm, and Robert, who entered the ministry. The elder son, John, married Susanna, daughter of Joseph Keene, of Stratford-on-Avon. He died at the age of forty-four in 1806, and left several children, but this branch of the family is now reduced to one only representative, my cousin, Eliza Hall. The eldest son, John Keen Hall, became a Baptist minister at Kettering, and married (first) Mary Fry, of Bristol, by whom he had one daughter, who inherited her father's estate at Thorpe Underwood, Northamptonshire. She was a person of high intelligence, of great culture, of ready wit, and of sweet disposition. She was always known to us as "Cousin Mary." She died unmarried November 20th, 1878, aged sixty-two. *A Record of Impressions, with Extracts from her Note Books and Journals*, has been published for private circulation by my brother-in-law, Joseph Truman, 1908. I have found the following in a letter from her father, dated Kettering, February 14th, 1825 :—

"Mary sends her love, and wants me to give you a specimen of her poetry, and she hopes you will excuse what you see amiss as she has no help, and that you will send her some in return. She has written several pieces.

“ LINES ON SENDING A ROSE DRAWN
TO MAMMA.

“ The Rose, the rose 'tis that I sing
The best, the brightest sweetest thing.
What is the sweetest flower that grows ?
The rose, the rose, the lovely rose !
Mamma this drawing I send thee
'Twas drawn by you know who, by me.
See 'tis a rose in shady bowers
Encircled by some pretty flowers.
I think that you will like it, Ma,
I hope you 'll show it soon to Pa,
Look, look Mamma 'tis pretty see,
'Tis drawn by you know who, by me.”

This is fresh, and pretty well for a child of eight years old. Her poor mamma was only to live two years longer to receive roses from her little daughter.

The following criticism of Montgomery's “ World before the Flood,” is precocious for a child of that age :—

“ Montgomery's ‘ World before the flood ’
Is not so admirably good
As some of our great poems are.
'Tis true that he has ta'en much care
To make the sense exact and sound,
But yet by me it has been found
That there 's much fiction mixed with
truth
Apt to mislead the minds of youth,
But still his world before the flood
Upon the whole is pretty good
Because no one believes it true
Altho' the work is very new.”

I think we shall say that this "upon the whole is pretty good."*

Another son of John Hall was William (Uncle William). He married my Aunt Jane Hall, sister of my mother, and his first cousin. He was a very witty man, a good man of business, and the life and centre of any company.

A letter to him, from his mother (Susanna Hall), dated Leicester, February 28th, 1815, exists. It gives him good advice:—

"I hope you will be very careful of your company and spend your Sabbaths as you ought to spend them. They are my happiest days and if you feel rightly they will be yours also. I warn you the world is a place of temptation and life a state of trial, and the young especially are in danger. I pray God, whom I trust I have chosen for my portion, to keep you from the evil of temptation." William was nineteen years old then. He kept a careful diary of his business journeys from Scotland to the Land's End (January, 1824, to January, 1839).

* James Montgomery, 1771-1854. ("World before the Flood," 1812.) "Displays more poetic fire and spirit than any of Montgomery's previous performances."—*Dictionary of National Biography*. His hymns are well known: "Songs of praise the angels sang" and "For ever with the lord."

"After all, the bard of Sheffield is a man of considerable genius."—Byron.

Another son of John Hall was Robert, born October 21st, 1787. He was in business in the wholesale drapery trade with his brother William in Bristol, and died (single) in a rapid consumption, occasioned by sleeping in a damp bed at Brecon. He discovered on waking in the morning that the sheets were clammy, and so took them out, rolled them up, and put them on the top of the four-poster. On returning a few days latter, the landlord told him of a strange occurrence ; that when he was there last there were sheets in the bed, but they were no longer to be found. Mr. Hall told him to take a chair and reach to the top of the bed, when he brought the sheets down covered with mildew.

“ Now Sir, those sheets have given me my death, and I am going home to die.”

There is a letter to him from his uncle (Rev. Robert Hall), dated December 9th, 1816, on the death of his sister, Mrs. Ransford, exhorting him to serious considerations and religious conduct. It also refers to his own precarious state of health.

Another son, James, also died unmarried ; I have seen his grave in front of the pulpit at Harvey Lane Meeting House, Leicester.

Charles also was unmarried, and died somewhere about 1833. A letter from

him to my Aunt Jane Hall, dated Leicester, March 21st, 1833, speaks of his serious state of health, indeed it looks as if he were in the last stage of consumption. He criticises the published *Life* of his uncle. "Neither Dr. Gregory's nor Foster's productions are such as might have been expected from such master hands; I prefer Gregory to Foster, but his is a kind of gruel without salt. Foster, I take it, is libellous in some of his remarks, his ingenuity had like to have him discover your revered parent did more harm than good by his preaching." A portrait of him on ivory exists, and justifies the description I have heard of him as a very droll man.

A daughter, Elizabeth, born at Arnsby, September 8th, 1789, married William Ransford, of Bristol, and died December 4th, 1816, aged twenty-seven, of rapid consumption. She left one son, Frederick Ransford, who settled in Australia in 1840, and died there May 2nd, 1894, leaving two married daughters.

George was the last of the family to survive. He died February 15th, 1877, aged seventy-five, and is buried in Harrington Churchyard, Northamptonshire. I knew him well, a very intelligent, well-read man. He lived with his niece, Mary Hall, at Thorpe Underwood, and farmed her property.

There were ten children born to John Hall and his wife Susanna. In addition to the seven mentioned, there were two sons, Ebenezer and Henry, and a daughter Sophia, all of whom died under the age of twenty-one, and unmarried.

Of the other members of the family of Robert Hall, of Arnsby, there is not much to be said. The eldest, Ann, who married Colonel Cotton as before stated, died in 1802, leaving one daughter, who died unmarried, and was a source of trouble to the family. Colonel Cotton must have died before 1789, as an entry in Mr. Hall's diary says, "Paid 5/- for inspecting his will in the Exchequer Jan. 15. 1789." Another daughter, Jane, married Isaac James, of Bristol (of whom more anon). She died March 22nd, 1834, and is buried in the Redcross Street Burial Ground, Bristol.

Another, Mary (unmarried), lived the latter part of her life with her sister-in-law (my Grandmother Hall). She died in 1843, aged eighty-six, and is buried in the same squalid ground at Redcross Street. I well remember her and her funeral, which was the first I had attended. She gave me a bureau, which I have used ever since, and what was better she gave me good advice as to speaking the truth always.

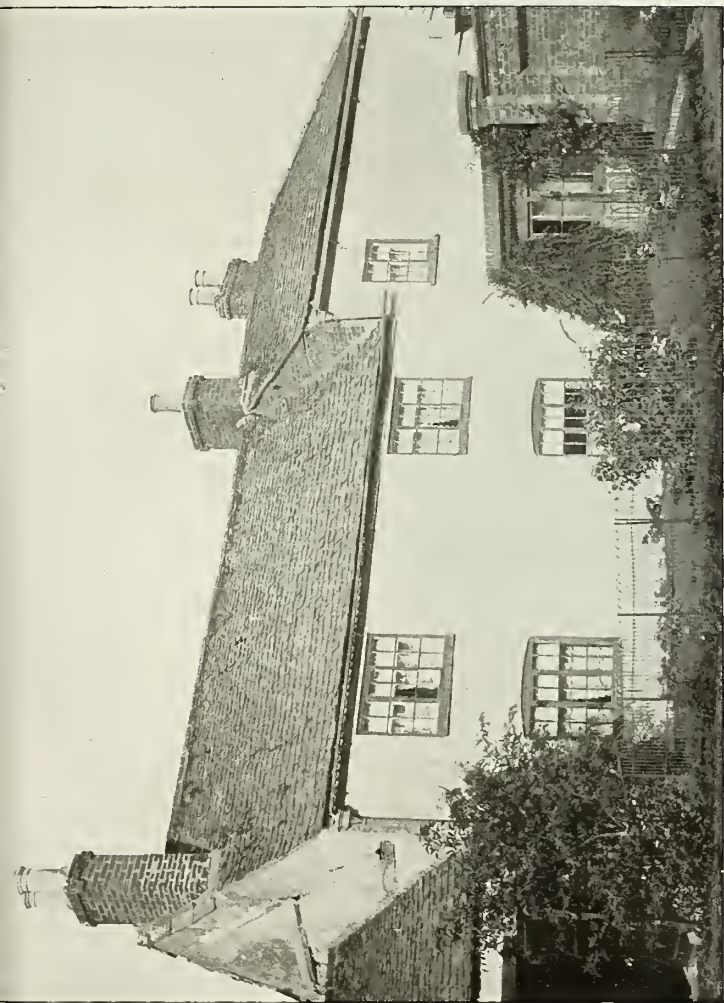
The remaining children of Robert Hall, of Arnsby, died in infancy.

ROBERT HALL,

OF CAMBRIDGE, LEICESTER AND BRISTOL.

It is at once more difficult and more easy to write a memoir of the second Robert Hall ; more easy because of the mass of materials available, more difficult from having to choose from them, and to distinguish what has already been recorded in the various lives. If I occasionally depart from the purpose of this paper, and do not confine myself to the documents which have now come to light, it is only because there are some anecdotes which are scattered through various books which may not come within the ken of those younger members of the family for whom alone these words are intended, and which serve to throw a light upon the character of their ancestors.

He was born at Arnsby on May 2nd, 1764, in the house of his father, a comfortable manse-like building of one story, attached to the meeting-house by a corridor. The garden abutted on the graveyard, and here the child was taken in the arms of his nurse and taught his letters from the inscriptions on the grave-stones. Whatever proficiency he made with his letters, it is certain that he was not backward with his tongue, for one day when he was about three years old, on his expressing disapprobation of some person



THE MANSE, ARNSBY.

who spoke very quickly, his mother reminded him that *he* spoke very fast. "No," said he, "I only keep at it." It has been noticed that some of his descendants have inherited this rapidity of speech, and when it is combined with the second characteristic the result is appalling.

From earliest youth he had a weak and delicate constitution, at the age of six suffering such severe pains in the back that he could only find relief by lying down, thus presaging the terrible sufferings which accompanied his whole life. During his stay at various preparatory schools he had read and studied Jonathan Edwards on the *Affections* and on the *Freedom of the Will*, and Butler's *Analogy*, before he was nine years of age. A cursory glance at the sermons of Jonathan Edwards, with his remorseless sentence of countless infants to the everlasting pains of hell on the ground that "a young viper has a malignant nature, though incapable of doing a malignant action," as related by Mr. Leslie Stephen in an essay on "The Works of President Edwards," suggests that our ancestor would have been better employed in reading *Tom Jones*, which had made its appearance a few years before, than in wading through the mire of these hideous doctrines.

At one of these schools, kept by a Mr. Simmons, where he stayed until he was eleven years old, his master declared that he could keep him no longer, for he was "often obliged, in order to keep pace with his pupil, to sit up all night to prepare the lessons for the morning." About this time, while staying at the house of a family friend at Kettering, he was made to deliver a short address to a select audience whom the host had invited. This evoked from him in after years the following severe commentary: "Conceive, Sir, if you can, the egregious impropriety of setting a boy of eleven to preach to a company of grave gentlemen, full half of whom wore wigs. I never call the circumstance to mind but with grief at the vanity it inspired; nor when I think of such mistakes of good men, am I inclined to question the correctness of Baxter's language, strong as it is, where he says 'Nor should men turn preachers as the river Nilus breeds frogs, (saith Herodotus) when one half *moveth* before the other is *made*, and while it is yet but *plain mud*.' "

Thence he was removed to the school of the Rev. John Ryland, of Northampton, where he remained for a little less than two years.

The Halls and the Rylands were intimately connected. John Ryland,

Jun., M.A., afterwards D.D., the son of John Ryland, of Northampton, preached the funeral sermon on the death of my great-grandfather, Robert Hall, of Arnsby, while my grandfather preached the funeral sermon for Dr. Ryland in Bristol.

Dr. Ryland was a great scholar, and his proficiency in the Hebrew language was such that he read a chapter of the Hebrew Bible to the celebrated Hervey, author of *Meditations among the Tombs*, before he was six years old, and before he was twelve had read Genesis in Hebrew five times through. He seems to have had microscopic eyes, for I have the notes of one of his sermons requiring a strong magnifying-glass to decipher.

This old friend (John Ryland, Sen.) of his father's was a very remarkable man, "whose excellencies and eccentricities were strangely balanced." "A certain spark was once making himself merry with some of his peculiar sayings, when he was interrupted by the Rev. Robert Robinson, who was himself a truly great man—'Sir, let me tell you, if you take away eleven parts out of twelve from Mr. Ryland, there will still be left a greater man than yourself.' "*"

As I concluded the notice of Robert Hall, of Arnsby, with the last letter to

* *The Life of Charles Lamb*, by E. V. Lucas. (Methuen, 1905.)

his son, so I find that the first letter of the son is to his father, dated Sept. 30th, 1777 :—

“HONORED SIR,—I take this opportunity to inform you that thro’ the Goodness of God I enjoy a good state of Health, which I pray may be devoted to the Glory of God and the vigorous persuit of evry Branch of my Learning, and the vigorous desire after more likeness to God, and I hope in the strength of Christ I shall take the kind advice which you have always given me and that I may (walk) worthy of the Saints and that as I grow in Age and Stature I may grow in Grace and in the Knowledge of God. I should be glad to see you at Northampton when you can make it convenient, and to have a letter from you by Mr. Ryland. Mr. Bull of Newport has been here and preached an excellent Discourse on Friday evening. Please to give my love to my Brother and Sisters and all my Friends. Mr. and Mrs. Ryland send their Respects.

“I am, Honoured Sir,

“Your dutifull Son,

“ROBERT HALL.

“NORTHAMPTON,

“Sept. 30. 1777.”

It is an excellent specimen of penmanship, written from the school of Mr. Ryland, in marked contrast with the wretched writing which year by year deteriorated.

It is a curious instance of an advanced stage of religious life at the early age of thirteen, and of the distant though dutiful manner in which he addressed his father, no doubt in accordance with the custom of the time. It is noticeable that he does not mention his mother, but she died the year before. A second letter, dated March 27th, 1778 (both apparently half-yearly exercises), is in much the same terms :—

“HONORED SIR,—The kind providence of God having still preserved me in a perfect state of health I gladly inform you thereof and hope you enjoy the same blessing. I ought to be exceeding thankful to God for his daily care of me and the numerous external blessings with which I am favoured in a peculiar manner beyond multitudes of my Fellow creatures.

“I hope I shall improve in every part of useful knowledge so as to become a comfort to you and all my Friends and especially in the knowledge, love and likeness of God to which all other is merely subordinate. I am sorry to hear

of the death of Mrs. Brian's child. I hope this instance of the frailty of human nature may excite me more seriously and repeatedly to consider my latter end. Please to give my love to my Brother and Sisters and all my Friends. Mr. and Mrs. Ryland send their respects.

“ I am, Honored Sir,

“ Your dutiful son,

“ ROBERT HALL.

“ NORTHAMPTON,

“ *March 27. 1778.*”

On his leaving Mr. Ryland's he went to Bristol, where he entered the “ Bristol Education Society,” now the Baptist College. This was in 1778, and he remained here until 1781, when, at the age of seventeen, he migrated to King's College, Aberdeen. At the age of sixteen he writes to his father a letter far in advance of his years, from which I extract the following :—

“ We, poor, short-sighted creatures, are ready to apprehend that we know all things, before we know anything ; whereas it is a great part of knowledge to know that we know nothing. Could we behold the vast depths of unfathomed science, or glance into the dark recesses of hidden knowledge, we should be ready to tremble at the precipice, and

cry out 'Who is sufficient for these things?' "

It was part of the preparation for the ministerial office at the Academy that the students should write and deliver essays on various subjects. One such, and only one, has been preserved. It is on "Ambition," and from a passing reference to it in the *Life* it appears to have been excluded from publication on the ground of the absence of evangelical principles. The paper, which has come down to us, is entitled, "*An Oration on Ambition*. Delivered by Mr. Hall to his fellow-students at Bristol, before he was 17 years of age."

Copied from Mr. Hall's own manuscript written at the time, it has the appearance of being a fragment, as it ends abruptly.

There is also a letter from the Rev. W. Anderson, dated Nov. 26th, 1831, giving the verdict of himself and Mr. Foster (Rev. John Foster) against the publication. This is addressed to Dr. Gregory, who was writing the *Life*. He says, "You will not, I think, feel surprized that Mr. Foster and myself have without any hesitation concurred in a most decided judgment that the 'Oration' ought not to be printed. We felt indeed interest in reading it, and it seemed to us to afford some promise of a great Orator,

though of a different character from what Mr. Hall subsequently assumed. The notion that it aims to illustrate and inculcate appears to be utterly inconsistent with the doctrine of Christianity. The only species of excellence recommended to be pursued is superiority of intellect, all moral qualities as well as actions directed to the promotion of human welfare being entirely overlooked. The exercise gives not a favourable view of Mr. Hall's notions and feelings at that period of life, and might have a bad effect on young persons by leading them to imitate the tumultuary writing of the oration rather than the beautiful composition of the other works. Mr. Foster says that if it were printed the end of the volume containing it would be sure to 'rot.' " However, as it was excluded from the published *Works*, and gives an idea of his mental power at a very early age, I have reproduced it here,* at the risk of having a "bad effect on young persons," and in the hope that Mr. Foster's threat of "rotting" may not be verified with regard to this small volume.

In 1780, when only sixteen years of age, he was set apart for the ministry, after examination and solemn prayer, his father delivering a discourse to him

* See Appendix.

from 2 Tim. ii, 1 : "Thou, therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus." The youthful minister preached himself in the afternoon. From a letter by Mr. John Pownall, a fellow student who accompanied him, it appears that he went to Aberdeen at the end of September, 1781. This agrees with the College Register, though Mr. Pownall, writing fifty years later, puts it down as 1782. He entered King's College, Aberdeen, on the foundations of Dr. Ward, from the Bristol Academy. At a time when it took sixteen hours to perform the journey from Bristol to London, it must have been a tedious progress to the north of Scotland. It appears that Mr. Pownall and Mr. Joseph Stennett* met Mr. Hall by appointment at Leeds, where, "after soberly enjoying themselves for a few days," they journeyed on to Edinburgh.

It would seem that the young man's passion for preaching was irrepressible ; for when on this journey he delivered a sermon "at the Leeds Chapel on the Sunday morning, with strict injunctions both on Mr. Pownall and Mr. Stennett by no means to intimate it to any of the collegians at Aberdeen." His text was,

* Mr. Stennett was a son of the Rev. Dr. Stennett. John Howard, the philanthropist, was a member of his congregation in London.

“Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended, but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forth,” etc. Mr. Pownall says in his letter, “Now, Mr. Hall’s leadings on this passage, although one half of a century has elapsed, as I have occasionally revolved them in my mind, have always appeared to me grand and beautiful, simple, yet majestic and sublime.” Then he writes a long account of the discourse, which instance of memory after fifty years is a singular tribute to the power of a budding orator of seventeen years.

At Edinburgh they were courteously received by Dr. Robertson, the historian, and also by the venerable Dr. Erskine. The latter on taking leave “exhorted him to self vigilance, kissed him, laid his hand on his head, blessing him, and commending him to the watchful care of the great Head of the Church.” Mr. Pownall, in recounting the interview with Dr. Robertson, writes, “I well remember a sentence or two of the doctor’s when he went to prayer addressing the Infinite Wisdom, Majesty, and power of the Most High, he exclaimed, ‘Bring thou light out of darkness, joy out of sorrow, order out of confusion and good out of Evil.’”

Dr. William Robertson, the author of the *History of Scotland*, 1759, and the

History of America, 1777, was Principal of Edinburgh University from 1762 to 1792.

“He was a pleasant looking old man, with an eye of great vivacity and intelligence, a long projecting chin, a small hearing trumpet fastened by a black ribbon to a button hole of his coat, and a rather large wig, powdered and curled. He always wore a cocked hat.”* Dr. John Erskine was the colleague of Principal Robertson at the Old Grey Friars Church, Edinburgh, at which church the parents of Sir Walter Scott attended. “The church the family attended was the Old Greyfriars, of which the celebrated Doctors Robertson and Erskine were the ministers. Thither went Mr. and Mrs. Scott every Sabbath, when well and at home, attended by their fine young family of children, and their domestic servants.”†

Sir Walter himself has left us a pleasant memory of those days in *Guy Mannering*, when Mr. Pleydell takes charge of Mannering for the Sunday in Edinburgh (Chap. xxxvii) : “‘And now, Sir, if you please, we shall go to the Greyfriar’s Church, to hear our historian of Scotland, of the Continent, and of America.’ They were disappointed, he did not preach that

* *Dictionary of National Biography.*

† *Lockhart’s Life of Scott.*

morning. 'Never mind,' said the Counsellor, 'have a moment's patience, and we shall do very well.' The colleague* of Dr. Robertson ascended the pulpit. His external appearance was not prepossessing. A remarkably fair complexion, strangely contrasted with a black wig, without a grain of powder; a narrow chest and a stooping posture; hands, which placed like props on either side of the pulpit, seemed necessary rather to support the person than to assist the gesticulation of the preacher; no gown, not even that of Geneva, a tumbled band, and a gesture which seemed scarce voluntary were the first circumstances which struck a stranger. 'The preacher seems a very ungainly person,' whispered Mannering to his new friend. 'Never fear; he's the son† of an excellent Scottish lawyer, he'll show blood I'll warrant him.' The learned Counsellor predicted truly. A lecture was delivered, fraught with new, striking, and entertaining views of Scripture history—a sermon, in which the Calvinism of the Kirk of Scotland was ably supported, yet made the basis of a

* This was the celebrated Dr. Erskine, a distinguished clergyman, and a most excellent man.

† The father of Dr. Erskine was an eminent lawyer, and the *Institutes of the Law of Scotland* are to this day the text-book of students.

sound system of practical morals, which should neither shelter the sinner under the cloak of speculative faith, or of peculiarity of opinion, nor leave him loose to the waves of unbelief and schism. Something there was of an antiquated turn of argument and metaphor, but it only served to give zest and peculiarity to the style of elocution. The sermon was not read—a scrap of paper containing the heads of the discourse was occasionally referred to, and the enunciation, which at first seemed imperfect and embarrassed, became as the preacher warmed in his progress, animated and distinct. ‘Such,’ he said, going out of the church, ‘must have been the preachers, to whose unfearing minds, and acute, though sometimes rudely exercised talents, we owe the Reformation.’”

In a letter to his father from Aberdeen, January 26th, 1782, a fragment of which only remains, he says, “I am not at all in love with the doctrines or the manners of the people of Aberdeen, but detest them both. The profligacy and the lives of the students exceed all description and conception, a very few excepted. Almost all of them are prophane [*sic*] most of them debauched. However I am happy when I consider that I never before felt that abhorrence of vice, nor saw the beauty of holiness so much as I do now.

“Contrasts heighten each other. We attend on the preaching of Messrs. Abercromny [*sic*] and Peters at New Aberdeen. They profess themselves Calvinists, but they never preach any of the distinguishing parts of Calvinism, and it is a settled principle with the Calvinists here that their distinguished tenets are not proper to be preached. Our advantage therefore is no more than if we were to attend Arminians. Better not know than shun to declare the whole counsel of God. Deliver me from such frosty spirited Calvinists. I go to the house of God empty, and come back empty, seldom profiting any under their preaching. This is the greatest grief I have, in other respects my situation pleases me very well. But, oh, how glad should I be to hear some good savoury preacher. The meanest who preached Jesus Christ and him crucified would be sweeter than the honey or the honeycomb.”

He speaks of new friends, particularly Alderman Cruden's family. “This is an extremely genteel family, and they treat us unspeakably kindly.” He mentions particularly “Miss Cruden, the sister of the Author of the *Concordance*” (Alexander Cruden, 1737), whose father was merchant and Bailie of Aberdeen. “We were yesterday visiting Dr. Gerard,

Professor of Divinity, and he behaved to us pretty well, though somewhat stiffly."

But the great feature of his residence at Aberdeen was his intimacy with James Mackintosh (afterwards the Right Hon. Sir James Mackintosh, M.P.), who preceded him by a year. They occupied the same rooms, and were inseparable, as the references in letters, speaking in the plural, testify.

Mr. Pownall speaks of "the late Sir James Mackintosh (an amiable youth then at College) as the only bosom companion Mr. Hall associated with during somewhat short intervals of relaxation. His (Hall's) sufferings still continued with him. I have frequently seen him reclining on the carpet in Mr. Stennett's room, rolling about in great agony." Mackintosh writes, "We had among us some English dissenters, who were educated for the ecclesiastical offices of their sect. Robert Hall, now a dissenting clergyman at Cambridge, was of this number. He then displayed the same acuteness and brilliancy, the same extraordinary vigour both of understanding and imagination, which have since distinguished him, and which would have secured to him much more of the admiration of the learned and the elegant, if he had not consecrated his genius to

the far nobler office of instructing and reforming the poor. His society and conversation had a great influence on my mind. Our controversies were almost unceasing. We lived in the same house, and we were both very disputatious. . . . During one winter, we met at five o'clock in the morning to read Greek, in the apartments of Mr. Wynne, a nephew of Lord Newburgh, who had the good nature to rise at that unusual hour for the mere purpose of regaling us with coffee. Hall read Plato, and I went through Herodotus."* "In their joint studies they read much of Xenophon and Herodotus, and more of Plato, and so well was all this known, exciting admiration in some, in others envy, that it was not unusual, as they went along, for their class-fellows to point at them and say, 'There go Plato and Herodotus.' But the arena in which they met most frequently was that of morals and metaphysics. After having sharpened their weapons by reading, they often repaired to the spacious sands upon the seashore, and still more frequently to the picturesque scenery on the banks of the Don, above the old town, to discuss with eagerness the various subjects to which their attention had been directed. . . . Night after night, nay month after month,

* *Life of Sir James Mackintosh*, i, 14.

for two sessions, they met only to study or dispute, yet no unkindly feeling ensued. The process seemed rather, like blows in that of welding iron, to knit them closer together. From these discussions, Sir James learnt more as to principles (such, at least, he assured me was his deliberate conviction) than from all the books he ever read."*

The Rev. W. Jack, D.D., Principal of King's College, Aberdeen, writing to the Hon. Lord Gillies respecting Mackintosh, says, "His chief associate at King's College was my class-fellow, the late Rev. Robert Hall. Like Castor and Pollux, they were assimilated in the minds of all who knew them by reason of the equal splendour of their talents, although in other respects they were very unlike. Under their auspices a society was formed in King's College, jocularly designated 'The Hall and Mackintosh Club.' They were, in fact, the centre of attraction, if not the source of light, round which eight or nine of us moved, partaking of the general influence. Of this group of once ardent spirits, I am now the sole survivor, and of all of them I can say that to a man they lived and died zealous supporters of what are called liberal principles. It was an object with all of us to rouse into action the energies

* *Ibid.*, pp. 13, 14.

of Robert Hall, whose great guns were sure to tell."

Mackintosh took his degree of Master of Arts and left college in the spring of 1784, and a hint of this is given in a letter of Robert Hall to his father, dated "Old Aberdeen, November 20. 1784," and endorsed, "Bobby Hall, Aberdeen," in which, after recounting the severity of the journey thither, which brought on a slow, putrid fever, and was only cured by drinking "a prodigious quantity of wine," he says, "I find retirement prodigiously sweet, and here I am entirely uninterrupted, and left to my own thoughts." He would hardly have written so if Mackintosh had been with him. There is little record of his life at Aberdeen after this. "Towards the close of his fourth year, he pronounced a Greek oration, which was heard with great applause. The spot on which he stood to deliver this memoriter address, is still carefully pointed out to those who visit the College."*

He took his A.M. degree March 30th, 1785, and in September, 1817, the faculty of Marischal College, Aberdeen, conferred on him the degree of D.D., an honour which he no doubt valued, while declining to avail himself of the title.

* *Biographical Recollections of the Rev. Robert Hall, A.M.*, by J. W. Morris. (London, 1833.)

In 1785 he was appointed Classical Tutor at the Bristol Academy, and Assistant Minister at Broadmead, to Dr. Caleb Evans, which duties he performed for nearly five years. An incident occurred about this time which, though amusing to us, was annoying to him, as is shown by an extract from a letter to Dr. Ryland, June 15th, 1786, giving the correct details of the scandal. "I went to Nailsworth upon occasion of a wedding of Mr. Beddome's son, with whom I had a slight acquaintance. The occasion naturally inspired gaiety, which I was not at much pains to restrain, but I am not at all conscious of anything highly improper that passed except what I am going to relate. Miss Wilkins and I were riding out together, and having spirited horses, we rode at a good pace, but not faster as I imagined than was agreeable to her. She was a considerable way before me, when to my surprise a man crossed the way and stopped her horse. I, supposing he did it wantonly to insult her in a drunken frolic, was very angry with him, and when I came up to him, said, '*Hang* you, you dog, why did you stop the lady's horse?' I did not hear a word the man said in reply, but when I understood from Miss Wilkins that the man stopped her by her own desire, I was extremely sorry, and took the

first opportunity of sending for the man to beg his pardon, with which he seemed perfectly satisfied. I understood, however, that he everywhere declared that I said, 'Damn you, you dog, why did you stop the lady?' A base and malicious slander. This was the whole of this affair, in which there was a good deal of imprudence and precipitation, but surely no aggravated matter of blame."

Suspicious of a tendency to Arminianism and jealousy at the increasing popularity of the younger minister sowed dissension in the church, and culminated in hot discussions and recriminations.* A meeting was arranged at the Mansion House under the auspices of the Mayor (Mr. Harris), but this only made matters worse, and the parties separated without hope of reconciliation. Echoes of this quarrel remain in this correspondence. A letter from the Rev. J. Hughes to Dr. Ryland, dated August 5th, 1793, nearly three years after this event, refers to Mr. Hall's flying visit to Bristol, and being invited by all the dissenting congregations to preach for them. He yielded to the pressure put upon him to preach at Broadmead, where, and at other places, he had crowded congrega-

* For fuller information see Dr. Gregory's *Life of Robert Hall*, p. 24, and *Recollections*, by J. W. Morris, Section IV.

tions ; “ but,” Mr. Hughes continues, “ the family of the late Dr. Evans are very much displeased that Mr. Hall should be thus permitted to *triumph over the ashes of the Deceased.*” The Rev. Joseph Hughes, A.M., was Assistant Minister and Tutor at the Academy from about 1790 to 1795, when he resigned and removed to London, where he originated the British and Foreign Bible Society in 1804. He was also one of the founders, and the first secretary, of the Religious Tract Society in 1799.

Under date Bristol, December 30th, 1785, Mr. Hall writes to his “ Dear and honoured Father,” in which letter he says that “ on account of one or two sermons I have preached, several I understand have taken offence, and have charged me with not preaching the gospel. The text upon which both the obnoxious sermons were built was Proverbs 25, 28, ‘ He that hath no rule over his own spirit,’ etc., and the discourses consisted of observations on the government of the temper.

“ I never heard of any objection to the doctrine, but they did not like the topic. Whatever dissatisfactions of this kind may arise, they will give me no great uneasiness, for as I was never bent upon coming to Bristol, I can with the less reluctance leave it.”

However, it was not until 1790 that he left Bristol, at the close of his quarrel with Dr. Evans, and then he was invited to succeed the Rev. Robert Robinson at Cambridge. Mr. Robinson had taken to enunciating Unitarian doctrines, to the great grief of his church, and had gone so far as to preach for Dr. Priestly. In a letter to the Church at Cambridge, dated December 9th, 1790, accepting their invitation and explaining his theological views, Mr. Hall says, "I am not a Calvinist, in the strict and proper sense of that term. I do not maintain the federal headship of Adam, as it is called, or the imputation of his sin to his posterity, and this doctrine I have always considered, and do still consider, as the foundation of that system."

He had evidently shaken himself free from the dismal chains of Calvinism since he wrote to his father from Aberdeen in 1782. A letter from Mr. Thorold, Harmston Hall, near Lincoln, dated August 9th, 1832, says, "As to Robert Hall, I had but a slight knowledge of him from '90 to '93. From thence to the end of '96 I knew him more intimately. At that period his creed was imperfect, wanting the personality of the Holy Spirit, and wavering between the terrors of Calvin and the plausibilities of Baxter. . . . His infirmities, which were

increasing, he concealed with dexterity, opposed with vigour, and sustained with uncommon patience. In his ministerial situation he was far from easy ; and he was vehemently severe upon Robinson for leaving his church a wilderness, and bequeathing his successor a bed of thorns." By way of personal reference, Mr. Thorold says, " He has confessed to me the taking of thirty cups of tea in an afternoon, and told me his method was to visit four families and drink seven or eight cups at each." Alas for the nerves of his descendants ! He goes on to say, " I am persuaded that when I knew him he had not by many degrees attained his meridian. I should regret my incapacity to do him justice and give you assistance, were I not persuaded that only the bud was exhibited to me, while the bloom and the fruit were reserved for those more deserving to be happy."

Few letters referring to his life at Cambridge have been preserved. His first published work there was on *Christianity Consistent with a Love of Freedom*, which appeared in 1791, when he was twenty-seven years of age. This was a criticism on a sermon by the Rev. John Clayton, of the Weigh House Chapel, reflecting on the loyalty of his dissenting brethren, and exhorting them to abstain from all political associations

in view of the spread of liberty in the kingdom of France. Mr. Hall, however, would never consent to this being republished, and would take no money offered for the copyright. Although holding to the main principles, he regarded the tone of animadversion as "severe, sarcastic and unbecoming."*

"Such however was the general eagerness to get a sight of this caustic pamphlet, that a guinea was offered for a single copy, though the original price was only eighteenpence. An unscrupulous publisher some years after produced a small edition printed on dingy paper to simulate age, but the watermark gave the date 1818 to the paper of a pamphlet which purported to be printed in 1791. As soon as this was discovered the remaining copies were suppressed."†

To this succeeded *An Apology for the Freedom of the Press*, with remarks on Bishop Horsley's sermon, published in 1793, which went through many editions through the following thirty years.

The vexation of the Whigs at their desertion by Pitt is shown in this pamphlet. "The character of Pitt is written in sunbeams. A veteran in frauds while in the bloom of youth, betraying first, and then persecuting his earliest friends and

* *Works of Robert Hall, A.M.*, iii, 4.

† *Recollections*, by J. W. Morris, p. 113.

connexions, falsifying every promise, and violating every political engagement, ever making the fairest professions a prelude to the darkest actions, punishing with the utmost rigour the publisher of the identical paper he himself had circulated, are traits in the conduct of Pitt which entitle him to a fatal pre-eminence in guilt."

A similar spirit is breathed in "a perfectly ferocious epitaph" suggested by Sydney Smith for a statue to Pitt:—

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE WILLIAM PITT,
WHOSE ERRORS IN FOREIGN POLICY
AND LAVISH EXPENDITURE OF OUR RESOURCES AT
HOME
HAVE LAID THE FOUNDATIONS OF NATIONAL
BANKRUPTCY,
AND SCATTERED THE SEEDS OF REVOLUTION,
THIS MONUMENT WAS ERECTED
BY MANY WEAK MEN WHO MISTOOK HIS ELOQUENCE
FOR WISDOM
AND HIS INSOLENCE FOR MAGNANIMITY ;
BY MANY UNWORTHY MEN WHOM HE HAD
ENNOBLED,
AND BY MANY BASE MEN WHOM HE HAD ENRICHED
AT THE PUBLIC EXPENSE.

A letter dated from Cambridge, October 22nd, 1793, to his brother-in-law at Bristol, says, "I hoped you would have given me a particular account in your own way of

the late unhappy riots at Bristol. They are differently represented here, and some imagine the Corporation are much to blame. The slaughter by all the accounts was very terrible, and such as I never remember to have been equalled in any riots before." This refers to the "Bristol Bridge Riots," when twelve persons were killed and many seriously wounded.*

The air was charged with the electricity of the French Revolution, and Cambridge, with its Liberal traditions, was naturally the theatre for contending factions. Accordingly I find in a letter dated Cambridge, September 29th, 1794, to his brother-in-law, Mr. Isaac James, the following : "Pray how do politics go on with you at Bristol? Here there seems a great tendency to extremes. Many are ripe for arbitrary power, and many go into the wildest extremes of democratic licentiousness, and Mr. Godwin's theory is gaining ground. Mr. Harwood has just favoured me with a letter recommending to my acquaintance a Mr. Coleridge of Jesus College, and accordingly I breakfasted with him a few mornings since at a friend's. He is a very ingenious young man, but intoxicated with a political and philosophical enthusiasm, a sophic, a republican, and leveller. Much as I

* See Latimer's *Annals of Bristol, Eighteenth Century*.

admire his abilities, I cannot say I feel disposed to cultivate his intimacy ; it is difficult or rather perhaps impossible to come into contact with such licentious opinions without contracting a taint." Coleridge was then twenty-two years of age, and Robert Hall was by eight years his senior.

At the end of this year Samuel Taylor Coleridge came to Bristol to join Southey and others in an abortive attempt to establish a model state called "Pantisocracy," on the banks of the Susquehannah, in America, resulting in his settling in Bristol and marrying Miss Sarah Fricker in the following year.

They met again, as Cottle, in his *Early Recollections of Coleridge*, i, 183, in describing Coleridge's sermon at the Unitarian Chapel at Bath in 1796, says, "A little before, I had been in company with the late Robert Hall and S. T. Coleridge, when the collision of equal minds elicited light and heat ; both of them ranking in the first class of Conversationalists, but great indeed was the contrast between them in the pulpit ! The parlour was the element for Mr. Coleridge, and the politician's lecture, rather than the minister's harangue." At a later day John Foster, criticising their conversational powers, said that "the words of Coleridge were

like those of a necromancer, and those of Hall like those of an emperor."

A letter from Cambridge dated April 29th, 1799, begins in a playful vein, "That I am a bad correspondent it is impossible to deny. My aversion from letter writing is unconquerable: it will descend with me to the grave. I respect you as much as ever, but I had rather take a horse and ride fifty miles than write a few lines to tell you so. But a truce to apologies." The shadow of heterodoxy is still hovering over him, for he says, "I have been lately in London and had the honour of preaching for Mr. Booth. This is indeed a feather in my cap. Ought I not to have a certificate of it under the handwriting of faithful Abraham (Rev. Abraham Booth) as a perpetual monument of my orthodoxy? He thanked me emphatically for my sermon. Mr. Lyon, by whom I send this is a Hebrew teacher in the University from which he has a small salary. He taught me what little I know of that language, but I never followed it up with any zeal. He is a pleasant, friendly man, will bear to hear his Jewish prejudices attacked with perfect good humour. Finding he was going to Bristol, I thought you might like to converse with him, and whatever civility you show him will be

considered as a favour conferred on myself. Remember, a Jew is a kind of antiquity. You want no other recommendation."

To this period belong some of his most celebrated works, notably the sermon on *Modern Infidelity*, preached first at Bristol in October, 1800, and at Cambridge in the following month.

This went through many editions (the one before me is the twelfth, dated 1827, and there have been many since), and it was translated into French, and published in Paris in 1836 as *L'incrédulité Moderne*. It called forth high commendations from the most distinguished members of the University, the Master of Trinity (Dr. Mansel, afterwards Bishop of Bristol) personally thanking him for his defence of the faith, and publicly stating, when an attempt was made to prevent the undergraduates from attending his ministry, that "if he were not the Master of Trinity, he should certainly often attend himself, and that even now he had experienced a severe struggle before he could make up his mind to relinquish so great a benefit." The following letter from Sir James Mackintosh may be entered here, for although most of it appears in the *Life*, some part of it was there suppressed :—

“SERLE STREET, LINCOLN’S INN,

“*March 26th, 1800.*

“DEAR HALL,

“From the enclosed letter you will see the opinion which the Bp. of London* has formed of your sermon, and you will observe that he does some justice to your merit. Mr. Archdeacon Eaton to whom the letter was written has allowed me to send it to you, and I thought it might not be disagreeable to you to have it, as the opinion of a man, not indeed of very vigorous understanding, but an elegant writer, a man of taste and virtue, not to mention his high station in the Church.

“I last night had a conversation about the sermon with a man of much greater talents, at a place where theological or even literary discussions are seldom heard. It was with Mr. Windham† at the Duchess of Gordon’s Rout, I asked him whether he had read it. He told me that he had, that he recommended it to everybody and among others, on that very day to the new Bishop of Bangor (Dr. Cleaver), who had dined with him. He said that he was extremely struck with the stile but still more with the matter. He particularly

* Dr. Beilby Porteus, Bishop of London.

† Mr. Windham, of Norfolk, “one of the habitués of Holland House, a remarkable orator and a great gentleman.”—*Holland House Circle*. Secretary at War under Mr. Pitt, 1794.

praised the passage on 'Vanity' as an admirable commentary on Mr. Burke's observations on Vanity, in his character of Rousseau.

"He did not like it the worse he said for being taken from the source of all good as he considered Mr. Burke's works to be. He thought however that you had carried your attack on Vanity too far. He had recommended it to Lord Grenville,* who seemed sceptical about anything good coming from the Pastor of a Baptist Congregation, especially at Cambridge.

"This you see is the unhappy impression which Priestly has made, and which, if you proceed as you have so nobly begun you will most assuredly efface.

"But you never will do all the good which it is in your power to do unless you assert your own importance, and call to mind that as the Dissenters have no man comparable to you it is your province to guide them and not to be guided by their ignorance and bigotry.† I am almost sorry that you thought any apology due

* Lord Grenville, Premier of the "All the Talents" Ministry, with whom Mr. Windham was a colleague.

† This refers to a note at the end of the sermon in defence of a passage in the sermon which ran thus, referring to the perpetrators in the French Revolution, "That the fury of the most sanguinary parties was especially pointed against the Christian priesthood, and religious institutions, without once pretending,

to those senseless bigots who blamed you for compassion with the Clergy of France, as innocent sufferers and as Martyrs of the Christian faith during the most barbarous persecution that has fallen upon Christianity perhaps since its origin, but certainly since its establishment by Constantine. Away with such senseless and merciless bigotry. I own I thought well of Horsley when I found him in his charge call these unhappy men 'Our Christian *Brethren* the Bishops and Clergy of the persecuted Church of France.' This is the language of truth. This is the Spirit of Christianity.

"I met a combination in Ovid the other day which would have suited your sermon.

like other persecutors, to execute the vengeance of God (whose name they never mentioned) upon his enemies; that their atrocities were committed with a wanton levity and brutal merriment; that the reign of atheism was avowedly and expressly the reign of terror; that in the full madness of their career, in the highest climax of their horrors, they shut up the Temples of God, abolished his worship, and proclaimed death to be an eternal sleep, as if by pointing to the silence of the sepulchre, and the sleep of the dead, these ferocious barbarians meant to apologise for leaving neither sleep, quiet, nor repose to the living. As the heathen fabled that Minerva issued full-armed from the head of Jupiter, so no sooner were the speculations of atheistical philosophy matured, than they gave birth to a ferocity which converted the most polished people in Europe into a horde of assassins, the seat of voluptuous refinement, of pleasure, and of arts, into a theatre of blood."

—Vol. i, p. 46.

Speaking of the human descendants of the giants he says :—

“ ‘ Sed et illa propago
Contemptrix Superum Sævæque avidissi-
ma cœdis et violenta fuit. Scires ex
sanguine natos.’* ”

“ The union of ferocity with irreligion is agreeable to your reasoning. I am going to send copies of my third edition to Paley and Watson, to Fox and the Lord Chancellor. I should like to send copies of your sermon with them. If you will direct six Copies to be sent here I shall distribute them in a manner which will I think not be hurtful.

“ Mrs. Mackintosh joins me in the most kind and respectful remembrances, and believe me ever

“ Dear Hall,

“ Your affectionate friend,

“ JAMES MACKINTOSH.”

“ Eternal God, on what are thine enemies intent ! What are those enterprises of guilt and horror, that, for the safety of their performers require to be enveloped in a darkness which the eye of Heaven must not pierce ! Miserable men ! Proud of being the offspring of Chance ; in love with universal disorder : whose happiness is involved in the belief

* *Met.*, i, 160.

of there being no witness to their designs, and who are at ease only because they suppose themselves inhabitants of a forsaken and fatherless world ! ” *

It is worth noting that not a single sentence of this sermon was upon paper at the time of its delivery, and the difficulty of obtaining “ copy ” for the publisher was great, as violent paroxysms of pain compelled Mr. Hall to write a few pages only while lying on the floor. In this way, and with great difficulty, the work proceeded for seven weeks, during the whole of which time “ Mr. Hall never saw a single page of the printer’s work. ” †

His next published sermon was *Reflections on War*, ‡ preached at Cambridge, June 1st, 1802, “ being the day appointed for the thanksgiving for a general peace. ” This was the Peace of Amiens. This also passed through many editions. During a visit to Bristol, Mr. Hall preached at Bridge Street Chapel the sermon entitled, *Sentiments Proper to the Present Crisis*, October 19th, 1803, and which contains some of his finest passages.

Mr. Pitt considered that the last ten pages were fully equal in genuine eloquence to any passage of the same length that can be selected from either ancient or modern orators.

* *Modern Infidelity.*

† Vol. i, p. xi. ‡ Vol. i, p. 85.



REV. ROBERT HALL, A.M.

(From a miniature on ivory by R. Bowyer.)

Mr. Hall was unexpectedly called upon to preach this sermon, which was delivered without notes of any kind, and it was not published until six weeks afterwards, the preacher having to write the whole from memory. A company of volunteers was present, and they rose when Mr. Hall addressed them in the following terms :—

“ As far as the interests of freedom are concerned, the most important by far of sublunary interests, you, my countrymen, stand in the capacity of the federal representatives of the human race ; for with you it is to determine (under God) in what condition the latest posterity shall be born ; their fortunes are intrusted to your care, and on your conduct at this moment depends the colour and complexion of their destiny.

“ If liberty, after being extinguished on the continent, is suffered to expire here, whence is it ever to emerge in the midst of that thick night that will invest it ? It remains with you then to decide whether that freedom, at whose voice the Kingdoms of Europe awoke from the sleep of ages, to run a career of virtuous emulation in everything great and good ; the freedom which dispelled the mists of superstition, and invited the nations to behold their God, whose magic touch kindled the rays of genius, the enthusiasm

of poetry, and the flame of eloquence ; the freedom which poured into our lap opulence and arts, and embellished life with innumerable institutions and improvements, till it became a theatre of wonders ; it is for you to decide whether this freedom shall yet survive, or be covered with a funeral pall, and wrapt in eternal gloom. It is not necessary to await your determination. In the solicitude you feel to approve yourselves worthy of such a trust, every thought of what is afflicting in warfare, every apprehension of danger, must vanish ; and you are impatient to mingle in the battle of the civilised world. Go then, ye defenders of your country, accompanied with every auspicious omen ; advance with alacrity into the field, where God himself musters the hosts to war. Religion is too much interested in your success not to lend you her aid ; she will shed over this enterprise her selectest influence. While you are engaged in the field many will repair to the closet, many to the Sanctuary ; the faithful of every name will employ that prayer which has power with God ; the feeble hands which are unequal to any other weapon, will grasp the sword of the Spirit ; and from myriads of humble, contrite hearts, the voice of intercession, supplication, and weeping, will mingle



MRS. ROBERT HALL.

in its ascent to Heaven with the shouts of battle and the shock of arms."

Through failing health Mr. Hall thought proper to resign his position at Cambridge in 1806, and subsequently removed to Leicester, accepting the pastorate of the chapel in Harvey Lane, where he remained until his removal to Bristol in 1826.

The eighteen years of Mr. Hall's residence at Leicester seem to have been uneventful, and there is nothing among the manuscripts of this period now brought to light, worthy of notice.

In March, 1808, he married, and this union, though with one of humble origin, was the source of the greatest happiness all through his life. My grandmother must have possessed great beauty, and when I knew her later in life was distinguished by her refinement and delicacy of manner. The change of congregation from Cambridge to Leicester must have been striking, and he expressed himself as preaching to the "simple-hearted" people there with greater satisfaction "than to the more refined audience at Cambridge." Still, his oratory must have been of a high order at Leicester, for it is stated in a leading article of the *Daily Telegraph*, Oct. 8th, 1907, commemorating the centenary of his settlement at Harvey Lane Chapel,

that "it was a common thing for admirers to ride all the way from London on Saturdays to Leicester—in those days of stage coaches—to hear Hall preach, returning to London on Sunday night or Monday."

His writing here was mostly of a controversial nature, such as on *Terms of Communion*, and *Reviews*. It was, however, here that he preached one of his most celebrated sermons, *On the death of the Princess Charlotte of Wales*, November 16th, 1817, which went through many editions. The edition which I have before me now is the sixteenth, published in 1827.

Among these papers are two letters (numerously signed) from the church and congregation at Harvey Lane, dated Aug. 3rd and Aug. 8th, 1825, begging him to decline the invitation from the Church of Broadmead, Bristol. The people of Leicester had not forgotten the fame of their great preacher, for nearly fifty years after, in 1871, they erected in their principal square (De Montfort) a colossal marble figure in the attitude of preaching. This was the work of the eminent sculptor John Birnie Philip. On a fine day in November, 1871, at a large gathering of Conservatives and Liberals, Churchmen and Dissenters, with the mayor presiding, the statue was unveiled after appropriate



STATUE AT LEICESTER.

speeches, and later on a *déjeuner* was held in the Masonic Hall, at which there were more speeches, and letters of apology for non-attendance were read. Among them was one from the Bishop of Peterborough, who had also subscribed liberally towards the memorial. In a letter from Mr. Justice Mellor, he writes, "I can truly say that I have never, in the Pulpit, or in the Senate, or at the Bar, heard anything which has lead me to doubt that he was the greatest Orator of his time." Archdeacon Musgrave (son of the late Archbishop of York) writes from the Vicarage, Halifax, "There are probably few persons living whose recollections of Robert Hall go within many years so far back as mine. I knew him in the *eighteenth century*, and have seen him scores of times in my father's house before the year 1800. I have a distinct remembrance of his person and of his preaching, when he settled at Cambridge, my native town. On his occasional visits to Cambridge in after years, I have entertained him with such hospitality as I could offer him at Trinity College, when I was Fellow there. The last time I heard him was at Leeds, when I was Vicar of Whitkirk near Leeds about the year 1824 or 1825. I honour his memory, and every remembrance of him is most grateful to me. I well recollect a sermon.

I heard from him at Cambridge in the summer of 1813 on every man being 'the priest of his own family,' and in support of the duty of family prayer; as also the sermon at Leeds many years later, on 'the joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.' "

There were present at this ceremony at Leicester the following members of Mr. Hall's family :—

Mrs. Jane Hall, daughter.	
Willm. R. Warren, son-in-law.	
Robert Hall Warren, and	
Mary his wife	
Charles W. Warren and	
Louisa his wife	
Eliza Jane Truman, and	
Joseph her husband	
Eliza Hall	} Grand-children.
Clara Hall	
Mrs. Jane Hall.	
Mary Hall, grandniece.	

Next in sequence of these manuscripts is the invitation from the church at Broadmead, Bristol, to my grandfather, then at Leicester. This is without date, but must have been sent in July, 1825. It is, of course, very numerously signed, and though by many well-known names in the city, none call for special notice. Very different is a less formal letter (also without date), congratulating him

on recovery from illness, and begging that he would consent to publish some of his sermons for the benefit of those who would come after. To this he would not consent. This is signed by—

Thomas S. Crisp (President of the Baptist College).

William Anderson (Classical Tutor, do.).

John Foster.

Joseph Cottle.

Jos. Grace Smith (Recorder of Hereford).

John Addington.

Isaac Leonard (Sen.).

William Warren (my grandfather.)

W. R. Warren (my father).

And by many others.

It must have been with mingled feelings that Mr. Hall came to Bristol in 1826, the scene of his first ministrations in 1785, and destined to be the scene of his last in 1831. He had left in early life under painful circumstances, and amid the acrimonious discussions with his senior minister, Dr. Evans. During this long interval, he was a frequent visitor to Bristol, where some of his finest sermons were preached, and time had completely healed the divisions which existed at Broadmead. He had also the companionship of his two sisters, one of whom had married Isaac James,

Classical Tutor at the College ; and generally the society at Bristol would be more congenial to him than that at Leicester. He does not seem to have published much during his five years' ministry here, and his closing days are carefully recorded in Dr. Gregory's *Life*. It is from the letters of his friends that we gather more of his habits, and of the estimation in which he was held. His immediate friends in Bristol were his brother-in-law (Isaac James), Mr. Addington (of Ashley Court), John Foster (the Essayist), Rev. T. S. Crisp (President of the Baptist College and his Assistant Minister), Mr. Anderson (Tutor to the College), Mr. James Livett, in addition to the leading members of his congregation. Mr. Addington, on retiring from medical practice in London, removed to Bristol that he might enjoy the society of his friend, and later on advised his nephew, John Addington Symonds, to settle here, who became one of the most eminent physicians of his time, and the father of the historian of the *Renaissance*. This was told me by his brother, Dr. Symonds, of Oxford. Mr. Addington erected a tablet with a Latin inscription on a summer-house on the terrace of his house, recording the pleasant hours that he and my grandfather had spent there. I regret to say that through some neglect of mine

I failed to obtain this at the demolition of the house.

His brother-in-law, Isaac James, was quite a character—a scholar, an antiquary, a humorist, a rhymester. It would seem that he could hardly talk except in rhyme, and one or two long letters are written in this fantastic style. “What is that curious building?” asked a stranger of him when walking through Bridge Street, noticing a Gothic erection of two stories, the lower of which was certainly used for the storage of wine. The reply was, “There is a spirit above, and a spirit below; the spirit above is the Spirit Divine, the spirit below is the spirit of wine.” The upper part was used as a chapel. He had an idea that the *Pilgrim’s Progress* would be more popular if “rendered into familiar verse.” And in this vain hope he turned the whole of the first part into rhyme, a matter of many thousand lines, which he published in 1815. He promised that the second part should speedily follow, “should this attempt meet the patronage of the public”; but as this did not appear, it would seem that the public were content with Bunyan’s immortal prose.

He was also the author of a book, this time in prose, published in 1800, entitled, *Providence Displayed; or, The Remarkable Adventures of Alexander Selkirk, of Largo,*

in Scotland, etc. To increase his income he kept a circulating library, and sold tea, gloves, etc., issuing an address, of which the first six lines will form a sample—

“Ladies and Gentlemen, Pray stop,
And take a look at James’ Shop,
In Wine Street plac’d, at Number Ten ;
Those who come once will come again.
I’ve various articles to sell ;
And some, no doubt, will suit you well.”

The earliest of his letters in this collection is dated September 24th, 1800, and is in the form of a long diary, addressed to Mr. Hall at Cambridge. Incidentally he refers to Dr. Beddoes and his curious treatment for consumption. He says, “Your true friend, Mr. John Morgan, in Maudlin Lane died, aged 35 years. His sister-in-law still takes care of his children, she must be possessed of great goodness of heart. Mr. Morgan, for some time, had cows in his Chamber, which mode was introduced here by Dr. Beddoes, but is now I believe pretty well at an end. It is said that Mrs. Finch, the daughter of Dr. Priestley, received considerable benefit by it.” This case is mentioned by Mr. L. M. Griffiths :—*

* *Bristol Medico-Chirurgical Journal*, March, June and September, 1902.

“The case of Mrs. Finch, daughter of Dr. Joseph Priestley—

“In 1799 ‘a stable adjoining one of the houses in Gloucester Row, 20 feet long 14 wide 9 feet high, was engaged and a space sufficient to contain a moderate bed, with a little room to place a table and move about was partitioned off. Two cows were placed in the other part of the building.’”

Mrs. Barbauld, the famous hymn-writer, writes in 1797: “I have seen Dr. Beddoes. He is a very pleasant man. His favourite prescription to ladies is the inhaling of the breath of cows; and he does not, like the German doctors, send the ladies to the cow-house. The cows are to be brought into the ladies’ chamber, where they are to stand all night with their heads within the curtains.”* Mr. James also refers in the same letter with great disgust at his having seen about three hundred poor captives marching to Stapleton. “They were of various countries, but mostly French.”

Referring to Mr. Hall’s sermon on *Modern Infidelity*, he says, “I greatly desire the particulars of your interview with the Bishop of London. The Democrats call you worse names than any

* Stanley Hutton’s *Literary Associations of Bristol*, p. 120.

in the tenth chapter of Nehemiah for your sermon, and your (as they would have it) Apostasy." (I cannot find this dreadful chapter in Nehemiah.—R.H.W.) And then he breaks into rhyme :—

“ And so I hear that Beilby Porteus
To Robert Hall is very courteous.
Strange that an Anabaptist writer
Should thus be honoured by the Mitre !
Should he be sent for by the Crown
‘Twould make us all sing Derry Down !
Unless we feared that he had a part in
His tale of Judas and John Martin.”*

This is no doubt in reference to the offer of promotion if he would accept ordination in the Episcopal Church.

Another letter, dated August 24th. 1814, recounts a tour he took with his friend Mr. Button to Holland and the Netherlands. On the 18th of June he saw the Regent, the Emperor of Russia, the King of Prussia, going in procession to the Guildhall, and on the 20th at the Review in Hyde Park, and what was more to his taste, the heralds going to proclaim peace. They had a long and tedious

* For “ John Martin ” see *Recollections of the Rev. Robert Hall*, by J. W. Morris, p. 107. He aspired to the office of Almoner of the Regium Donum, which he is said to have attained by sycophancy and political subserviency.

It appears that long before this, and on many subsequent occasions, Mr. Hall received the hospitality of the Bishop of London.

journey in a sailing-boat from Brightlingsea to Ostend, where they were kept six hours before they could land "because of the sands." Then they spent a day at Bruges, and then by barge to Ghent. They were struck by the size of this vessel, for about fifty dined at two tables, a good dinner of three courses, fruit in plenty for dessert, good beer as much as they liked, and barge hire included for twenty-four miles, and all for three shillings each. They had a different experience in travelling through the night in a lumbering coach for thirty miles over a paved road to Brussels. There they were much impressed by a procession of the Virgin through the decorated streets, and at the courtesy of the people, who allowed them to remain standing uncovered while all around were kneeling. He describes with minuteness his progress to Vilvoorde (where Tyndale was burnt), to Antwerp, Flushing, Middleburgh, Dort. At the last-named place they were surprised at the Sabbath being kept in the same loose way as in popish countries, and at the men wearing their hats during the sermon. At Rotterdam they could not go to the English Church, as Bonaparte had made a cannon foundry of it, so no service could be held.

At Delft they saw the monuments of William I, Prince of Orange, of Van

Tromp, Grotius and others, and at Leyden they saw "the grandest street in Europe." They visited the Hague and Haarlem, where they heard the celebrated organ, which was so powerful that his hat trembled in his hand though he held it tight. At Amsterdam he rejoiced in having secured a book which he had been trying to get for forty years, *The Dutch Baptist Martyrology*, which he hoped to get translated, a folio volume of 1350 pages, with 104 fine copper plates, and extremely scarce even in Amsterdam.

In another letter, dated Camberwell, June 30th, 1819, he says, "Before breakfast I saw five poor men executed in the Old Bailey. It was an affecting and solemn sight. Four of them were respectable looking persons, of whom two were guilty of taking bills out of letters."

John Foster's* life and character are so well known that it would be superfluous to say anything on this subject here. There are several letters of his to Mrs. Hall, some of condolence and appreciation of her husband's talents. One letter to Dr. Gregory, written in September, 1832, however, is amazing in its criticism of Mr. Hall's conversation. He says "that Hall would *very often* contend more (like Johnson) for victory than for the honest love of truth. This,

* John Foster, 1770-1843.

I have heard from some of those who had been the associates of his early life say, was quite his habit ; so that (with the exception of a very few reserved points) he would strenuously maintain any side of any question, and be much more pleased with perplexing and confounding those he conversed with, than with faithfully and honestly endeavouring to set them right. And unless both myself and many other observers be utterly mistaken, he retained, a diminished indeed, but no small portion of this through life. A sly adroit management, a dexterous mode of propounding or opposing, might have made him maintain almost anything (short of this sporting with the sanctities of religion) might have made him maintain opposite opinions at different times." With a great deal more of this deprecatory criticism, he is constrained to say at the end, " Believe me, in all that I have written I am not seeking to *depreciate* our great friend. Could I not expatiate on his fine qualities with the best of you ? Have I not done it, with the utmost animation, hundreds of times, and wherever I have been ? "

In a letter from Mr. Addington, Ashley Court, January 28th, 1833, to Dr. Gregory, he refers to Mr. Foster's contribution to the *Life* as " surely a piece of Mr. Foster's finest writing, and

many parts of it afford in the perusal a kind of ineffable delight. What for instance can be more exquisite than the close? and yet as a whole to me I confess it gives a feeling of discomfort. I do not say my construction of it is the right one, but it impresses me with the idea that Foster in his determination against being a mere eulogist, has gone out of his way, and out of the way of strict truth also, for his qualifications of the character whom after all it is evident he so much admires as a preacher. Whilst he extols his hero's intellectual superiority, almost in the language of idolatry, he does not appear to me to do justice to his extraordinary benignity and piety."

I well remember as a little boy bowling my hoop with my brother over to Stapleton to inquire for Mr. Foster, when we were eight and ten years old, but found that he had already passed away. He was buried at Downend, and the funeral being accidentally delayed, it took place by starlight. My father attended the funeral, and I remember his describing the weird effect of the star shining down into the rock-hewn grave. "An accidental circumstance," as my mother writes, "but I think in exact accordance with his sombre views."

I possess a copy of his *Essays* given to my mother, and inscribed :—

“ Eliza Hall from J. Foster, with his most cordial wishes for her happiness here and hereafter.”

Of course, from early life at Aberdeen to its close at Bristol Sir James Mackintosh* was Hall's great friend, and it was to him that people looked as the most capable of writing the *Memoir*. There were, however, some discordant notes, mainly on the suspicion that Mackintosh was not sufficiently in sympathy with Evangelical Religion, and doubtless accentuated by the disparaging remarks on Dissent which appeared in Sir James's letter on *Modern Infidelity*.

Sir James began the task of writing the *Life*, but had not proceeded far when his health broke down, and he passed away in May, 1832, little more than a year after his friend.

Dr. Olinthus Gregory, Professor of Mathematics in the Royal Military Academy, continued the *Memoir*, much to the satisfaction of friends. John Foster writes of Dr. Gregory's *Memoir* as “ on the whole very much the kind of performance which was (in default of Sir J. Mackintosh) the most desirable, and will be the most generally acceptable, especially to religious readers.”

A letter from Mr. Thorold, Harmston

* The Right Hon. Sir James Mackintosh, 1765-1832.

Hall, near Lincoln, to Dr. Gregory, dated August 9th, 1832, must be quoted here in illustration of the views of Sir James Mackintosh at the time of his residence at Cambridge, and of the charity of his "critic." "Your information concerning Sir James afforded me much pleasure. When I knew him he was full of French politics and French infidelity. Should he have reached Heaven, I know of but one person whose arrival there will exhibit the extent of mercy more fully than his!" Who is this person?

Sir James was a constant guest at Holland House, "probably the best talker where conversation ranked among the fine arts."* It may have been that had he lived to continue the *Life of Robert Hall* there would be difficulty in getting it completed, for it has been said of him that "his projects were as illusory as the menu which Lord Beaconsfield described as a leaf of unfulfilled prophecy."

Dr. Parr was a friend of both Mackintosh and Hall, and occasionally had spars with the former. Sir James was denouncing O'Coighley (the Irish conspirator). "Yes, Jamie," said Dr. Parr, "he was a bad man, but he might have been worse; he was an Irishman, but he might have been a Scotchman; he was a priest, but

* See an article on "Holland House" in *Blackwood*, December, 1908.

he might have been a lawyer ; he was a republican, but he might have been an Apostate." But Southey, Coleridge and Wordsworth also abandoned those principles of the French Revolution which they held in their youth.

Mr. Hall made the acquaintance of Dr. Parr at Cambridge,* and the friendship continued through life. The Doctor published a powerful eulogy of Mr. Hall in notes to his celebrated Spital Sermon. "In common with all men of letters, I read with exquisite delight Mr. Hall's sermon, lately published. As compositions, his former works are replete with excellence, but his last approaches to perfection."

I have before me an extract from Dr. Parr's will, sent with a mourning ring : "I give a ring to the Reverend Robert Hall of Leicester as a mark of my reverence for his exemplary virtues and my admiration of his sublime and hallowed eloquence."

My grandmother has told me of the long visits which Dr. Parr paid to my grandfather, how they smoked, and the quantity of tea they drank. Dr. Parr was very particular to have the best tea, and as it was then a guinea a pound, it was a serious item in the household economy.

It is pleasant to associate the name of

* The Rev. Samuel Parr, LL.D., 1747-1825.

the great slave liberator, William Wilberforce, 1759–1833, with our ancestor, and a long letter exists (though never published) dated Taplow, Nr. Maidenhead, 3rd September, 1825 :—

“ As I am writing to you, I cannot but mention another subject in which I take a deep interest. You will have heard of the new University about to be established in London for the purpose of giving the opportunity to persons of moderate fortune, of acquiring knowledge of the arts and sciences at a small expense. I have been pressing strongly the extreme importance of having, amongst other subjects, Lectures on the Evidences of Xtianity—Paley’s Three Treatises for instance—Natural Theology, the Evidences, and *Horæ Paulinæ*, might be taken as Text books by persons of all opinions as to Church government or religious principles. I cannot but fear that instructing young men in the various branches of Philosophy, Natural History etc., and leaving them entirely ignorant of the grounds and evidences of the Truth of Christianity will prove an infallible source of scepticism, the more so, because the Parents and Relatives of the students will commonly be less instructed than themselves, and their Philosophical studies will naturally induce a habit, or at least a Profession, of not

adopting any opinions 'till after enquiry and consideration. I am therefore endeavouring at least to have a separate fund for endowing a Lectureship on the Evidences, if no part of the general fund can be so applied. I own it shocked me to hear the objection urged against the application to my desired proposal of the general fund, that it would not be consented to by the Jews, who are powerful supporters of the Institution.

“ I really shall be thankful for your opinion on this subject. I would not trouble you to give me more than your conclusion which might be expressed in a single line, *that I might quote your authority*. I am sorry that when you wrote you did not mention the state of your health, and can truly assure you that I am always much interested on that head; being with cordial esteem and regard.

“ My dear Sir,

“ Yours very sincerely,

“ W. WILBERFORCE.”

A letter from Julia Strachey to Mr. Boswell Gregory, The East India House, with the Bristol postmark, June 21st, 1833, says, “ I had the pleasure of a most comfortable two hours with dear good Mr. Wilberforce the other day at Bath—walking with him to and from the Pump-room. He is more delightful and

excellent than ever, if that is possible. Amongst other things he talked to me about Robert Hall's works, and spoke in high terms of your dear Father's labours as the Editor and Biographer of Hall. He said it was well that Sir James Mackintosh did not write the *Life*."

The late Mr. James Godwin told me that one week day in passing Broadmead he saw a crowd round the chapel door, and was told that people were staying to see Mr. Wilberforce and Mr. Hall come out, and presently he saw them coming out arm-in-arm.

A letter from Dr. Chalmers reminds one of the great friendship which existed between the two. My grandfather, though a great admirer of his sermons, spoke of his elaborating style as "like the movement of a door, all motion and no progression." The Doctor called on my grandmother a few days before his death, and kissed her on leaving, saying, "I do this from love to your husband."

A letter from Daniel Wilson (Bishop of Calcutta) refers to his notes of sermons, which he took down in many visits to Broadmead, and which he published in the *Christian Observer*, excusing himself on this ground from sending them to the collected works.

Letters of eulogy also occur from Lord Bexley (formerly Mr. Vansittart), Chan-

cellor of the Exchequer, and from Lord Henley.

Hannah More was another friend of my grandfather's, and she presented a beautifully bound volume of her *Spirit of Prayer* to my mother, with the inscription, "Eliza Hall with best wishes for her welfare here and hereafter. Barley Wood." This has unfortunately been lost.

Cottle in his *Early Recollections of S. T. Coleridge*, writes, "Hannah More has more than once said to the writer, 'There was no man in the Church nor out of it, comparable in talents to Robert Hall.'" He often visited Mrs. More, and told a friend he was struck with her frequent references to the conversation of Dr. Johnson and Garrick, as if quite recent.

Mr. Hall had been in Mrs. More's company, and to an inquiry respecting her he said, "She was become more free and conversational than formerly. She used to be very stately, talked little, as though preparing for some smart and sententious saying." He remembered being in company with her some years before—Mr. Wilberforce and others were present—and much was said as to the inconvenience of His Majesty's (George III) birthday happening on June 4th, for it kept persons in high life too late in London. All Mrs. More said during the morning was that the only immoral act

George III was guilty of was being born on the 4th of June! Astonishment was expressed at such an attempt at smartness. "One so low, and Sir," said Mr. Hall, "so shocking. Only consider a man sinking in being born, Sir, a thing he could not help, but Sir, she is more conversational now, more free and easy."

No letter of Hannah More occurs among the present papers, but one from Canon Randolph, of Bristol Cathedral (Old Belshazzar), begs him "to come up and help us at a Meeting of the Bible Society at Wrington on July 20th, 1827.

"Allow me to say that a carriage shall call for you and bring you back after some warm speeches and a cold three shilling ordinary. Wrington is only 11 miles and dear H. More, who will be delighted to see you, in the direct road."

A conversation is recorded, when reference was made to Hannah More: "She is clever, Sir, but she has spent her days in curtsying to Bishops. No wonder at it, Sir, if you consider where she was born, a small farmhouse at the Fishponds near Bristol. She was early introduced to Garrick and Johnson, and ushered into society to which she was unaccustomed. Very high church, Sir, all her good heroes are Clergymen; her dolts and stupid folk, either lay dissenters or dissenting Ministers."

Hannah More recalls the Macaulays and Babingtons with whom Mr. Hall was intimate. Our family have a large silver tobacco-box with the Macaulay Arms engraved on the cover, the gift of the Rev. Aulay Macaulay, Rector of Rothwell Temple, to my grandfather, and Mrs. Macaulay, the widow of General Macaulay, was a great friend of my grandmother to the last. Lord Macaulay refers in his *History of England* to the Book of Common Prayer. He says: "It has directly or indirectly contributed to form the diction of almost every great English writer, and has extorted the admiration of the most accomplished infidels, and the most accomplished Nonconformists, of such men as David Hume and Robert Hall." He must have had in his mind Mr. Hall's eulogy: "The Evangelical purity of its sentiments, the chastised fervour of its devotion, and the majestic simplicity of its language have contrived to place it in the very first rank of uninspired compositions."

Bishop Porteus (Bishop of London) was on intimate terms with my grandfather, receiving him hospitably at his palace at Fulham, and presenting him with a handsome Polyglot Bible* with a eulogistic inscription. This was unfortunately sold (by accident) at my grandfather's death, and has not been recovered.

* This was priced in the catalogue at £25.

Bishop Porteus told my grandfather that the Prince Regent was so pleased with his sermon on the death of the Princess Charlotte, that if he entered the Established Church he should be promoted to the bench of Bishops.

Bishop Ryder (first of Gloucester, afterwards of Lichfield) was another of his episcopal friends. When he was Bishop of Gloucester he called one day, and was announced by the servant as Mr. Bishop, of Gloucester. There was a dissenting minister at Gloucester of this name, and when Mr. Hall came to meet him, he found him in the room with my mother (then a young girl), who was knitting, and her ball fell and rolled under a bookcase. So my grandfather found the Bishop on his hands and knees grovelling to recover it! My mother was much disconcerted when her father came in, and in his surprise at seeing the Bishop, saying: "My lord, I had no idea it was you; my stupid servant said it was Mr. Bishop, of Gloucester."

The intimate social relations which he had with many members of the episcopal bench would seem to preclude the possibility of his holding the view of his friend, John Foster, that "Bishops are non-conductors of the Spirit."

Of memoranda of recollections and of conversations there are many. Perhaps

the best are those of Mr. James Livett, a well-known Bristol citizen, of high intelligence and wide reading. The first time he spent in Mr. Hall's society the conversation turned on Hannah More's writings, of which he spoke very highly. Someone mentioned a review of one of her books in the *Eclectic* written by Miss Taylor.

"Miss Taylor, Sir," said Mr. Hall, "Miss Taylor think of reviewing Miss More! Sir, it is like throwing soft peas against a rock." "But Sir, she has certainly pointed out some defects in Mrs. More's work." "Why yes, Sir," said Mr. Hall, "she has certainly shewn the instinctive sagacity of a fly to fix upon the corrupt parts." He did not admire Mrs. More's conversation. He said she too much sought for point and epigrammatic turns.

Mr. Livett says that for thirty years Mr. Hall made a point of reading Hebrew daily. This is confirmed in a letter of the Rev. W. Anderson.

To sustain the judgment that he passed upon a translation of the Book of Job, he said: "I ought to know for I have been in the habit of reading Hebrew critically every day for these thirty years."

Mr. John Noble Coleman writes: "My Father and myself called upon him at Leicester, and found him reading a

portion of the Syriac version of the Old Testament in Walton's Polyglott. In the course of conversation I introduced the name of Bishop Horsley, when Mr. Hall said with his wonted animation and emphasis, 'Horsley, Sir, a man who has thrown more light on the Scriptures than any man that has appeared since the days of the Apostles.'"

Mr. Hall, speaking of oratory, said: "I have heard Fox and it was wonderfully fine." "How did it affect you, Sir?" "Like darts of fire, Sir."

Some speaker being mentioned who was said to be deficient in imagination, he said: "Imagination, Sir, has little to do with oratory. You find very little imagery in Demosthenes; and Burke who had so much was by no means an effective speaker, although his speeches, when read as written compositions, are so incomparable. But in the House of Commons, he was called the Dinner Bell. Erskine on one occasion was so totally wearied while Burke was speaking that he crept out under the table. The speech was printed, and Erskine a few days after on reading it was in raptures."

Speaking of his political views, Mr. Livett says: "I cannot but think that Mr. Hall was by natural temperament aristocratical, and that reason and associations overcame his natural bias.

He had a reverence for antiquity, rank, and descent. You may remember how accurately he was acquainted with the descent and relations of noble families." He was present in Westminster Abbey at Handel's commemoration, and saw the King stand up in the performance of the *Messiah*, shedding tears. He said nothing ever affected him so strongly. "It was a great act of national assent to the fundamental truths of religion." This was in May, 1784, during the reign of George III.

His detestation of public meetings is shown in the following: "I never attend public meetings, there is no need whatever of them. All the information which it is desirable to give, might be given as easily and much more properly from the pulpit. In that way religious anniversaries would have a religious character, but these meetings as they are now conducted with speeches and mutual applause are but Spiritual Ginshops."

He had a righteous horror too of "over much preaching." In a letter to Dr. Ryland, January 16th, 1811, in commending to him a young man of great promise, he says: "His constitution is extremely delicate, and if he often preach three times in one day, I have little doubt he will soon be in his grave. That detestable practice, an invention of Satan, I have no doubt of preaching three times

in one day, and in one place, has already destroyed some of our most eminent and useful ministers, indeed it appears to me to have been introduced by the powers of darkness for that purpose and for no other. They who cannot be benefitted by two sermons will derive no advantage from three. Such are my views on this subject, and if I could prevail on all churches to abandon that practice, I should think it would justify a peregrination through all corners of the land. I hope you will excuse my warmth of freedom on this subject. The design of my introducing it at present is to protect my admirable young friend from this snare of the Devil."

In illustration of his power of abstraction, I was told by the Rev. Dr. Cox that on the occasion of the opening of a chapel at Hackney, during the sermon Sir James Mackintosh, who was in the gallery, sprang to his feet and called out, "For Heaven's sake open these windows, there are ladies fainting around me." At the luncheon afterwards someone said to Mr. Hall: "I hope, sir, that you were not annoyed at Sir James's extraordinary behaviour," when Mr. Hall replied that he was not even aware of the presence of Sir James.

From an unexpected source comes high eulogy in, *The Caxtons*, by Edward

Bulwer-Lytton, who devoted the whole of Chapter VI, and many pages in other parts of the book, in illustration of one phase of his character, and so late as 1903 a marble medallion was erected to his memory in the Baptist Church House in London.

The catalogue of his library, which was printed for the sale of his books, is interesting reading. The first item is "Biblia sacra Polyglotta, 1657," with Lexicon to same, in all eight volumes, folio, priced at £25, and as there is no entry of the sale of this, it is most likely that it was the Bible presented to him by Bishop Porteus (referred to before), and which my father made strenuous efforts to trace without success. A large proportion is of classical works, for which my grandfather paid good prices. A bill before me for ten volumes mounts up to £19 11s. 6d.

It is questionable whether the grand style of the preacher would find favour in these degenerate days of pulpit oratory, but I have neither the intention nor the ability to discuss this subject. My sole reason for putting together these notes has been to preserve such scattered remains as have come to light since the publication of the authorised *Life*, in the hope that the younger members of the family may be induced to read the *Life* and some of

the more celebrated sermons and political writings. At his death the copyright of his works was sold for £4,000, and this, together with about £1,300 subscribed by friends, provided a comfortable income for my grandmother.

It has often been said that his retorts (sharp as they undoubtedly were) were sometimes cruel, but I think in these cases they were intended to rebuke vice or vanity. Such would be the reproof to the minister, addicted to spirits, who asked for brandy and water. "Call it by its proper name, call it distilled death and liquid damnation, and you shall have as much as you like, sir." The erring minister was not likely to repeat his application. Or again, the young minister who was anxious to know the impression which his sermon had made, and asked Mr. Hall if he could mention any passage which had pleased him. "Yes, sir, that from the pulpit to the vestry." But such rebukes are frequent and generally well deserved.

I would have the young people for whom these lines are written to remember the great names with whom their ancestor is connected — John Foster, Dr. Chalmers, Dr. Parr, Hannah More and others ; and that when they tread the aisles of Westminster Abbey they will see the monument to his earliest and latest

friend, Sir James Mackintosh, and the Z-like figure of William Wilberforce, who was buried in the north transept, with the attendance of both Houses of Parliament. In St. Paul's they will see the monument of the silver-tongued Bishop Porteus, who, notwithstanding his fulsome lines on George II, should be remembered as a friend of their ancestor who presented him with a valuable Polyglot Bible. In Lichfield Cathedral they will see the kneeling figure by Chantrey of the saintly Bishop Ryder, another attached friend, and at York Minster the recumbent effigy of Archbishop Musgrave, who had often entertained my grandfather at Cambridge. At Windsor they will see the dramatic monument to the Princess Charlotte, whose death was the occasion of one of his finest sermons, while in our own Cathedral of Bristol it is pleasant to see that Hannah More is commemorated on the reredos.

The Rev. Robert Hall died February 21st, 1831, leaving his widow with four children.

Eliza, born April 5th, 1809; married my father, William Richards Warren, May 15th, 1832; died November 29th, 1853; aged 44.

She was highly intellectual, of refined and artistic tastes, of gentle disposition, though strong and unbending in her hold

of evangelical religion of the Puritan type.

Jane, born September 20th, 1810; married her first cousin, William Hall; died August 28th, 1880; aged 69.

Very bright and clever, quick at repartee; most kind and generous, but sharper of tongue than my mother.

Mary, born July 24th, 1818; died (single) December 26th, 1871; aged 53.

Of a refined and sensitive disposition, and shrinking from society. Very clever with her pen and pencil.

Robert, born May 22nd, 1814; died (single) at Batavia May 30th, 1832; aged 18.

He was of a roving disposition, and could not settle down to any regular employment. He was allowed to go to sea in the hope this would reconcile him to work on land. A letter exists from him to his mother, dated April 22nd, 1832 (endorsed by her "Poor Robert's last letter"). He died in the following month. He speaks hopefully of his return to England, but that was never fulfilled. It was not till long after that official news of his death reached the family, for I remember when very young that hope of his return was still faintly kept alive. A long letter to him from his father, dated October 15th, 1830, gives good advice as to his intercourse with his fellow apprentices:—

“Accustom yourself to behave to your fellow apprentices with uniform kindness and respect. You will soon find your account in it, you will gain in their esteem, they will take pleasure in obliging you in return, your character will rise and your breast will be the abode of peace. Never demean yourself by contending about trifles, yield in things of small moment to the inclinations and humours of your companions. In a word, my dear Boy, make yourself amiable, fear God and love your fellow creatures, and be assured you will find wisdom’s ways, ways of pleasantness, and her paths, paths of peace. To say all, in one word, If you are wise, my heart shall rejoice, even mine.

“I am your affectionate Father,

“ROBERT HALL.”

ROBERT HALL SCHOLARSHIPS.

There are two scholarships founded at the Baptist College, Bristol, in memory of Mr. Hall, one of £12 and one of £8 annually for students of the first year, and two of the same amount for students of the second year. These scholarships are awarded to such students in their order of merit as shall pass the matriculation or other examination of the University of London.

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APPENDIX.

AN ORATION ON AMBITION. Delivered
by Mr. Hall to his fellow students at
Bristol, before he was 17 years of age.

THE subject on which I intend to address you is Ambition. A Passion so well understood, and by you my worthy colleagues so deeply felt, it would be superfluous to define. Let it suffice then to say, that by Ambition, I mean nothing else than a thirst after pre-eminence. This passion is by nature implanted in the mind of man as a strong incentive to action, it is a spur that pushes on mankind to the noblest pursuits, and without a considerable degree of it, it is impossible for a person of the highest parts, to shine much either in the literary, commercial or political world. The wisdom of the Creator is in nothing more displayed, than in the constitution of human nature. We are "fearfully and wonderfully made." God very well knows, that the powers of mankind are in general too lethargic to be active; and that without activity the welfare of society cannot be promoted, nor the mind itself be kept in proper tune.

The mental faculties would, through inactivity stagnate, and stagnation would make them rot. The passions, therefore, are each of them a distinct stimulus to actuate the mind, and put the wonderful machine of the soul into motion. "Passions," saith Pope, "are the elements of 'Life.'" But no passion is, in this respect better adapted to answer its end than that of which we are now treating.

Place a genius for a few years in an obscure corner of the globe, let him be denied the sight of anyone but an old woman or a dusty cobbler, his powers would, in that situation rust, and by degrees fritter away. Remove him to a public Seminary of learning, where science flourishes, he'll look around him, he'll wish to imitate, imitation will produce emulation, and emulation will, by degrees reach to the summit of eminence. In his former situation he possessed the same pearl of genius as in this, but it lay hid in the dark depths of obscurity, and wanted something to extract it. Solomon says, "As iron sharpeneth iron, so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend," and we may add, "So a man sharpeneth the wits of his friend."

Pride and ambition are, I know, generally thought to go hand in hand, but upon a minuter inspection, I believe it

will be found that these passions are in some respects quite contradictory.

Pride looks backwards, Ambition looks forwards. The grand incentive to Pride is a retrospective view of our inferiors ; whereas a man is fired with Ambition by looking up to his superiors. God has so variously disposed of beings, and ranged them in so many different classes, that there are scarcely any so low, but what may find some lower than themselves, and by frequently casting their eyes downwards upon them, instead of looking upwards, they are bloated with pride.

Men of ordinary abilities look at idiots, idiots look at brutes, thus they all find their inferiors, and a sense of superiority produces self-conceit. To trace the origin and process of Ambition is almost impracticable ; but this much is evident, that it supposes knowledge of imperfection, for why should we wish to climb higher, were we already at the summit ?

Pride, on the other hand, springs from an insensibility of defect, and I know not what imagined greatness. Ambition presupposes these things. A sensibility of defect, admiration of superior excellence, and an eager desire of acquiring it. The language of this passion, or rather of a person under the influence of it, is this. " That man has a larger stock of knowledge, he has deeper penetration, a more

variegated, peculiar vein of wit, than I have, his qualifications are superexcellent ; I admire them !

“ Shall I tamely submit to be his inferior ?—No, most assuredly, I ’ll not rest satisfied till I outdo him in those bright endowments.”

A Pedant may sit in his study, or hermit-like, moulder in his closet, till he knows nothing and thinks he knows everything, having never seen anybody else, he may be apt to suppose there is no other lettered man in the world ; and may be ready to repeat to himself this soliloquy,

“ I am the man of all mankind most wise,
And when I die, no doubt all wisdom dies.”

But bring him out to the light ; introduce him into the world, and he ’ll stare about him in surprise to find that there are others as learned, as wise and as witty, and more so, than himself. Society will dart into him its electrical fluid, and if his mind be not entirely cankered with rust, it will make him imitate, emulate and excel. This consideration is of itself sufficient to evince the superior excellence of a public education ; and in this, as well as many other respects, our advantages are inestimable. Let us prize, let us improve them. A person who has never enjoyed a public education must

be an entire stranger to the energetic force of Ambition ; for whom can he wish to excel ?—Not himself surely, and as to other competitors, he has none. There is implanted in most men a strange desire to excel. We are not content to see our superiors, and nothing but the finest persuasion that it is impossible to attain the point of superiority in view can allay the anxiety. There is something so mortifying in the idea of inferiority, that a generous breast cannot brook it.

God has made us alike in nature and essence ; we are all endowed with the same primary faculties, have the same powers of intelligence, reflection and judgment, our bodies and souls are united by the same ties. Were we a different class of being from our fellow creatures, were we brutal and they human or, we human and they angelic, superiority would be their distinguishing prerogative and a sense of inferiority would not be irksome ; but seeing there is primarily this general equality among mankind, a sight of another's super-eminence feelingly affects us and makes us look like dwarfs ; we seem to disgrace our situation and to fall vastly short of the dignity of our rank.

If we be truly ambitious, we shall not be content to be great, but shall wish to

be *greater* and *greatest*. An ambitious man, if he views another superior to himself in any qualification, no matter what, will be extremely eager to attain it, and the more so because he sees another possess it.

Whether this may arise from a conviction of the possibility of its attainment I will not pretend to say, but the fact is evident.

Suppose a person is a proficient in some science, tho' perhaps we scarcely ever before thought of it, or thought of it very slightly, ambition, like a mighty engine will set all our powers to work, and will operate upon us with such an irresistible vehemence, as not to suffer us to stop till we have attained an equal or superior degree of knowledge. And this seems to constitute the specific difference between Ambition and a general desire of good,—the latter might subsist were there no other being in the universe, the former ever carries with it the idea of a competitor.

Thus has God been so indulgent as to set an intrinsic value on real good. But, it may be asked, "Have not Virtue and Knowledge native charms, intrinsic splendour sufficient to induce mankind to pursue them?" Doubtless they have were it not for the infatuation and blindness of men which withholds them from

viewing these beautiful objects in their proper colours. But God knows the depravity of man, and has accommodated himself thereto ; so that by Ambition men are induced to attend to that which they would otherwise despise or neglect. Ambition is a general passion, confined to no class or degree. The king and the peasant, the prince and the mechanic, the senator in robes, and the beggar in rags, are alike the subjects of Ambition.

Ambition concerns us especially in excelling others in our own sphere. The beggar is seldom ambitious of a throne. This passion is not confined to courts, or stations of dignity, but diffuses itself through every body of men.

Ambition, like most other passions, is right or wrong, according to the object to which it is directed. If the enslavement of mankind by power, or the destruction of thousands by the sword (as is too often the case) be its object, it is *criminal*. Why do I say *criminal*?—Diabolical—Damnable!

The Devil goes about seeking whom he may devour. Ambition, thus directed, is an insult on the natural right of mankind ; it is a snatching from the hands of innocent mortals the brightest diadem with which omnipotence has invested them ; it is stripping the Almighty of his prerogative, a daring attempt to

dethrone him and take his seat, who is Judge of the whole earth.

A beggar has as much right to rule as any sovereign in the universe, he is equal in the grand important points which constitute the real dignity of human nature. The constituent parts of this mind and body are the same, except that they are both oftentimes cast in an infinitely finer mould, than those of many who assume to themselves superiority. All natural right to rule must arise either from some specifical difference in the person who assumes it, or from an express commission from the King of kings. As to the former, all mankind are equal. "The rich and the poor meet together, and the Lord is the Maker of them all," and, as to the latter, I believe any man would be hard set to prove that he had a charter immediately dropped from Heaven, empowering him to have dominion over his fellow creatures. To men who have a thirst after dominion, nothing is more easy than a sacrifice of all virtue and piety. They must indeed be men of the most abandoned principles. I have therefore often reflected with contempt on the petty sophistry of *Antony* in his oration on Cæsar's death, where he says—

"Oft when the poor have cried, Cæsar hath wept,
Ambition should be made of sterner stuff."

Not at all. Ambition transforms itself into different shapes. A man of Cæsar's spirit would assume various, and sometimes opposite characters, all subservient to Ambition. He will be sneaking or imperious ; rigorous or clement ; kind or cruel ; he will assume the mildness of a nymph, or the fierceness of a devil ; the modesty of a virgin, or the impudence of a strumpet, without the least concern, provided he can thereby promote his ambitious views. Men generally take secondary for primary qualities ; and by that means they are frequently deceived in their opinion of mankind. If a man acts cruelly, they will immediately affirm his predominant vice to be cruelty ; if covetously, his predominant passion will be avarice, whereas perhaps all these passions are but subordinate means to attain the grand ends of Ambition.

A man may, and if he be ambitious, he will, often act quite contrary to his natural inclination. Would we wish to form a right judgment of mankind, we should endeavour to know the leading passion ; and then every difficulty will vanish and every inconsistency appear consistent. The grand aim of political ambition is the acquirement of dominion. This is the end proposed.

If gentle means will bring it about, very

well. The tyrant will win over men's minds, by all the allurements cunning and opulence can invent. Largesses, dignities, honours and riches, will be profusely squandered like dust. The populace will attribute all these indulgences to benevolence and generosity, but it is Ambition ; it is only the Devil assuming the appearance of an Angel of Light. But if these gentle methods prove ineffectual the mask is thrown off. Satan soon appears in his proper colours, men will be slaughtered, houses plundered, cities demolished, empires overturned, and the foundations of dominion laid in blood.

Cæsar, like most other ambitious men, came to an untimely death. Brutus, the noble, disinterested *Brutus*, stab'd him. Though he was his intimate friend, the sharer of his bounties, and the object of his affections, yet he sacrificed his private interest to the far more important interests of the republic ; he laid by the friend while he acted the patriot.

Political ambition has been the grand origin of almost all the temporal disasters that have befallen mankind. Do you ask what it is that has depopulated countries, destroyed cities, spread wars, overturned the most flourishing states, fattened the earth with human gore, and made the world an Aceldama, a field of blood ?—

Ambition. How shocking is the consideration that the earth should be made a chaos for no other reason than to indulge the insatiable ambition of a puny mortal ; that the lives of thousands should bleed, a sacrifice to the caprice of a worm ! All things conspire, both the pomp of the proud, and the meanness of the poor, to proclaim the direful effects of Ambition. The ruin of states, the bloody tumults of battle, and the crash of falling empires, echo with a voice loud as thunder, "Beware of Ambition." Ambition (political ambition I mean) subverts its own end, and toils itself in building what it has pulled down, and in pulling down what it has built.

What raised the proud walls of Babylon ?—Ambition. And what demolished them ? — The same answer returns, Ambition. Tyrants pursue their ambitious schemes in so violent and sanguine a manner in hopes of immortalising themselves. They are not disappointed, they do immortalise themselves, but their memory owes its perpetuity to its infamy. They are immortalised, principally by the eternal curses and imprecations of all succeeding ages. I am sure I could derive no very exquisite pleasure from the consideration that I was universally thought to be the image of Satan ; the murderer of my fellow-

creatures, and the plague of the universe. The hatred and universal detestation of mankind could afford me no very pleasing entertainment in a gloomy hour.

Judge then of the pleasure of tyrants. But this is not all. Their impious audacity will, in the world to come, I doubt not, sink them as much deeper than others in hell, as they were higher than others upon earth.

The “blackness of darkness,” “the wrath to come,” the “fire that shall never be quenched,” the “worm that shall never die,” will be ill-balanced by a little temporary grandeur.

But let us turn our eyes from this gloomy prospect, and advert to a more pleasing scene. We feel in us the passion of ambition, it is a noble passion; let us not stifle, but direct it. All that we have to do is to fix it on its proper objects; these objects are presented to us.

Knowledge is a proper object of ambition. The faculty of intelligence is the leading faculty of the mind; but intelligence is nothing else than a power of understanding; it is in vain, therefore, implanted in man unless it be put in exercise.

God has wisely suited our powers to our inclinations, our improvements are progressive, and we are endowed with a capability of receiving new ideas *ad*

infinitum. In this respect man differs widely from brutes. Instinct for a few years directs them, they soon arrive to the highest point of perfection of which they are capable. The bird builds her nest, breeds her young, provides them food, and after that has done all the exploits she can do. Five years, fifty years, five thousand years, would in all probability increase her experience, but would not in the least facilitate her practice or add an ace to her expertness. But man is intended to answer nobler purposes, every day adds to his knowledge. The mind springs forward with such ardour that it can never be said "hitherto thou shalt go, but no further." We are never content with what we have possessed, either as to duration or improvement.

Heap millions of ages on millions of ages, and add new millions to new millions, the mind, at the close of that long period, would be as far from being satisfied as at the beginning, she would crave an endless repetition to eternity. This thirst after immortality, together with a capability of constant progression in improvement, afford, I think, as strong a proof as can be given, that we are immortal. It does not appear consistent with the wisdom of the Creator to crush so fine a flower in the bud before it has

time to bloom. It is not analogous with his conduct as the God of nature. If we take a walk in a garden, we shall find that every plant is brought to perfection and then withers. "Man groweth up," we are told, "and then he is cut down like grass." The mind will never be perfect. It can never be said of it "Now, thou art arrived to the summit of perfection." It will be perpetually climbing higher and higher, nearer and nearer to the celestial Being, without ever reaching the summit, its motto will ever be "*Sublimiora Sublimiora petamus.*"

In this view what a noble field will open to ambition. If the soul be always progressive, it is impossible to conceive of the dignity to which it will at length advance, or rather it is impossible to conceive of a degree of dignity to which it will not advance. There is not, perhaps, a flaming Seraph, holds a rank to which the meanest soul will not once be exalted. Too ambitious, in this point of view, we cannot be, it is our glory—if we are not so, we do not act up to our dignity. Never let us think we have learned enough, let us always enlarge our prospect, "Give our minds sea room" and stretch our view to those boundless regions, those untrod tracts of science which lie before us.

The wide theatre of nature we have to act upon. Let us be ambitious to outstrip our fellow creatures and leave them leagues behind us. Let us extinguish every spark of *false*, and flame with *true* ambition. We do not want motives to excite us, if crowns, thrones, dignity, and dominion (metaphorically speaking) if these objects can rouse our inactive spirits, we shall be active.

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